

IN DEFENCE OF MAGIC

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THE MEANING AND USE OF SYMBOL
AND RITE

BY

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To
ANNE KIDDER WILSON

An adept in true magic

Magic, as expressed in religious rite and symbol, is the creation, or renewal and deepening of the primary emotions which orient men towards the Irrational.

FOREWORD

IT is a wholesome practice when one finds that he has broken the golden silence of the wise with words, and has assailed the attention of a public sorely overburdened with the printed word, to ask himself why he was tempted.

Searching for an answer I find that I have been interested to consider a situation that meets the modern parent, that is, the modern "Anglo-Saxon" parent. The education of the emotions has disappeared as a technique, although certain rituals and magics still lift their heads like almost submerged icebergs from the level of our daily life. The conservative schools train the "minds" of the children, the modern schools train them for "life," meaning an executive outward life expressed in human relations. Would it be possible to offer to certain children an education in ritual, richer and more sensitive than

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those rather haphazard efforts mentioned later in the chapter on education ?

This book considers that which ritual may bring into the lives of young and old. The material bearing upon it has been collected during some years of reading, but it will be evident that the treatment of religious rituals and magic rites and their value and meaning, is neither exhaustive nor that of an expert in these fields. The idea of the book came into being during conversations with Mrs. Edmund K. Wilson. She has spent many hours in working with me over the material, and I cannot easily express my gratitude for her sympathy and for her help, especially in connection with the notes on Chinese philosophy and on modern science and mathematics.

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CHAPTER I

IRRATIONAL TRUTH

HOWEVER fascinating it may be to believe that nothing in the universe is true which is not susceptible of rational proof based upon physical laws, the better we understand these laws the more deeply we are convinced that truth is relative to the nature and to the needs of him who understands it. In proportion as the claims of the intellectual to interpret the universe become exaggerated, the consciousness of another kind of truth emerges, just as vital to man's experience, which cannot be explored and measured by rational processes. The scientist interprets all phenomena by the reason. That is his field. Reality, in his work, is

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measurable and calculable. He should not, however, deny the existence of another sort of truth, although this truth may be irrelevant to his activities. To scientific reality must be added a complementary reality, a supernatural and irrational order of truth expressed in symbol, as science is expressed in concrete formula. By symbol¹ I understand any expression of an irrational truth, as, for instance, a rite or a charm. This essay is a study of religious and magic rituals as examples of the symbolic presentation of this irrational truth. These rites are not, as has often been held, attempts to bring about material results in the rational field; they have a different aim.

The fundamental purpose of religious rites is the control of a power which we are all conscious of possessing. There are moments, called forth by beauty and mystery, when our sense of strength and joy is suddenly enhanced. What is this mysterious emotion? Its understanding rests upon an acceptance of the idea of Irrational truth,—called Irrational because it is a reflection of facts about

¹ Note I, page 121.

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the universe which the reason is inadequate to reproduce. The concepts of science in the last analysis rest on measurement, on quantities. Irrational truth is concerned with qualities, qualities mysterious but disguised under names such as courage, love and faith. One face of truth is its emotional, irrational face, and it is this aspect which we hope to see emerge more clearly in the course of this study of religious magic.

It is a mystical small-mindedness to undervalue reason and science but to deny a share of reality to the magic and irrational is a kind of scientific Calvinism. We are so familiar in the West with the methods of Aristotelian common-sense, the scientific method that works with causes to produce effects, that we are apt to confound Aristotelian concepts with ultimate truth. For the last few decades the only branch of the family of truths admitted to good society has been scientific truths. I suggest that magic truths, or religious truths, for some time outcast, should be received again upon equal terms with their rational relatives. They certainly come in strange guise, dressed in the

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fantastic symbols of distant countries and primitive times.

Two different ways of regarding the rite and the symbol are expressed by Sir J. S. Fraser in the *Golden Bough*, and by D. H. Lawrence in certain essays on *Corn and Snake Dances of the North American Indians*. Fraser's great book on the magic practices of all parts of the world is marred by a certain misunderstanding of the mentality of primitive people. If Fraser himself were performing a magic rite, he would have a logical premise and would look for a reasonable result. This attitude he transfers to the primitive sorcerer and no doubt to the priest who celebrates any rite containing a supernatural element. He concludes that "every single profession and claim put forward by the magician as such is false ; not one of them can be maintained without deception, conscious or unconscious" ; for "a flaw lies in his premises, his conception of the nature of life." Fraser thinks that when the magician is not an unsuccessful scientist (doctor, rain-bringer and so on) he is a wilful deceiver of his people.

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This very usual point of view among nineteenth-century students of folklore is to be contrasted with that of D. H. Lawrence, who writes of the Snake Dance of the Hopi Indians, "How is man to get himself into relation with the living powers of rain, sun, thunder? Our religion (the white man's) says that the cosmos is matter and we conquer it by science. The Indian says No, it all lives—man must conquer the cosmic dragons of living thunder and live rain. *We* make the conquest by dams and reservoirs and wind-mills. The Indian seeks to make the conquest from the mystic will within him, pitted against the cosmic Dragon. Through science we are the conquerors and gods of our earth. But to the Indian the so-called mechanical processes do not exist. All lives, and the conquest is made by means of the living will. This is the religion of aboriginal America, perhaps the aboriginal religion of all the world. The white man has made a partial conquest. Our corn doesn't fail us. We have no seven years' famine and apparently need never have. But the other thing fails us, the strange inward sun of life. Our cosmos

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is a great engine and we die of ennui." Lawrence calls the corn dance a participating in a natural wonder. There is no god, but all is godly in the mystery of creation. To every part of the wonder we must answer in kind.

It is in this way that the rite and the charm control the irrational element, not by setting in movement a series of causes, but rather by the way of preparing a stage, so that the magic element can make its entrance.¹ It is the method of concentration and brooding as opposed to the method of thinking and doing.

To Fraser the savage is an undeveloped scientist, to Lawrence he is a being of another dimension and his magic rites are directed towards possessing through feeling the Irrational, the ultimate mystery. The Indians seek to conquer not the so-called natural conditions of a place, but the Life Spirit of the place, striving to gather into their souls more and more of the creative fire, the creative energy which shall carry their tribe through the year.

¹ Note II, page 123.

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The concrete manifestation of the search for the Irrational is found in the rites and ceremonies to be considered later. The abstract, metaphysical concept of the Irrational itself is best expressed in Vedantic Philosophy somewhat as follows : The ultimate Brahma has neither beginning nor end, has no why, whence or whither, for these beginnings and ends belong to the finite sense of time ; these questions of why and where are asked by the intellect, seeing its reflection in the mirror of illusion. Is the image in the mirror real or non-real ? This question cannot be answered—we can only say that it is an image. So to the Vedantist—the intellect pursues its aims within the frame of the Irrational which it can never touch.

According to Hindu conviction the realization of being is not attainable by the process of thinking. As the senses can never perceive thought so thought can never attain metaphysical realization. This realization, which was in effect a new state of consciousness, was striven for by meditation and concentration. To induce independent and true recognition was the one intention of all Hindu religious

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training in the great and difficult art of Raja Yoga.

It is not the purpose of this book to determine how far this new level of consciousness can be gained by Yogi training or in other ways. I merely wish to examine religious and magic rites and symbols, with the idea of endeavouring to understand their real significance, which the acceptance of the idea of irrational truth seems to place upon a new basis. It is now time to turn to concrete examples of these rites.

CHAPTER II

TECHNIQUE OF THE MAGICIAN

AWARENESS of the living mystery—this defines the attitude of the magician. The priest, the holy man and the wizard, each seeks to awaken and to deepen the emotions that turn the minds of men towards the Irrational. The wizard uses spells, the priest ceremonies, and the saint in contemplation achieves the ecstasy, whose spreading waves touch others with bliss and power. All three strive to possess the irrational truth and all employ feeling as a means. The field of their consciousness is complementary to that of the scientist. As the scientist turns to an outer, so the magician turns to an inner world.

Eliphas Levi¹ held that the spell was intended primarily to affect the magician's

¹ Note III, page 137.

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own consciousness. It is the contagious force of his own belief that gives him power ; he must be steeped in his own charms and rites, not intellectually, but emotionally, even sensuously, as it were with the cells of his body. The contagion of his emotion induces the appropriate state in the participants of his ritual.

The magician is sensitive, then, to the living mystery of all things, he must be able to feel, with Jacob, " How dreadful is this place, this is none other than the house of Elohim." He must perhaps reverence the living power of the holy snakes or feel a sacred awe and tenderness before an animal who, because it is the food of the people, is therefore a brother, flesh of their flesh. He awakens in himself, by concentrated brooding, this creative emotion, and he conveys this emotion by his magic. He gives to others the virtue of reverent awareness and the creative power which follows the awakening of this emotion. The Yogi repeats " Thou are that "—until the veil of Maya lifts and he looks into the face of the Self. The Priest listens to the talking oak and its murmurings

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shape his own unconscious thoughts ; he consults the entrails of the sacrifice or the flight of the birds for that which he has long unwittingly known ; like Moses and the Prophets he withdraws into a lonely place to talk with the Lord. The Magician gazes into a crystal or observing the day, hour, place, and the signs in the heavens, summons spirits from the earth, air, fire, and water. Each is seeking, by various means, to increase his own wonder and awareness ; his magical power.

The prophet and the magician have a natural talent for feeling and for conveying to others the awe, the shudder that is at once the beginning of the spell and its aim and end. Yeats holds that certain objects and certain words have a faculty of awakening in the eye and ear an association irrespective of their intellectual content and sometimes contrary to it. They are *magic*, he thinks, because they constitute a special language known to the world soul or collective unconscious and therefore have a powerful emotional effect upon most people. This is like Jung's theory of archetypal ideas, inherited mythological

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motives, recurring in dreams. However this may be (and we shall return later to both Yeats and Jung) it seems to be true that there has always existed a vast and varied technique for controlling emotion. It is this which we call the technique of the magician.

CHAPTER III

PRIMITIVE RITES

AMONG magic practices the rites of primitive people are especially significant. Levy-Bruhl has coined the expression *participation mystique* to express the characteristic psychology of the primitive. This means that the mind of the individual is merged in that of the tribe. Only the Irrational, the Supernatural is real to the savage. He has no interest in the natural and scientific fact. If a man dies, the primitive thinks it is because the spirit of life is weak in him—the natural fact that he contracted a disease or was killed by a tiger is to the primitive merely the circumstance of his death. It is the how but not the why. In case a white man rescues a West Coast negro from death by drowning, feeds and clothes him, the negro will often ask to be paid for

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his rescue. The negro thinks the white man has disturbed the rhythm that was making for death, has taken the negro away from his fellows of whose emotional life he was a part, and for these injuries he should surely be recompensed. It is only with difficulty that our conceptual language can represent what takes place in the mind of a savage, for a savage deals only in feelings, not in concepts. He is an emotional not a rational being. The spirit of the pack and the hive are still alive in him. The tides of feelings that run so strongly in his being find their appropriate expression in his ritual dances.

The ritual of the Hopi Snake Dance affords us an example. Live snakes are caught, washed and soothed ; the Indians dance with the snakes in their mouths and they free the snakes at the end of the ceremonies. Their purpose, it seems, is to exchange spirits with the snakes because the snakes are nearer the great powers of thunder, rain, and sun than man can be and to exchange spirits with a snake is a good way to conquer the life spirits, the force that resides in thunder, in rain and

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in sun. The Indian tries to understand these spirits, and to this end he concentrates his thought upon them, feels at home with them, and stands all the while in awe of their mystery ; he wishes never to ignore them or dully take them for granted else the inward strong power of his life, which to him is a power much like the spirit of the thunder and the rain, may fail him. This dance is a ritual of realization, a saving of the dancer's soul, or the mystic will within him, by realization and concentration upon the mystic will in Nature. To the Indian there is no dead abstraction called Nature. He evokes definite spirits, the sun spirit, the corn spirit, the buffalo spirit, and conquers each, loves each, and the living will within it. The snakes who have been carried in the mouths of the men are set free and take the human will power and love, the submission and also the defiance of men back to the sources of life.

An awareness of a mystery is the Indian's aim in his magic dance. This desire to awaken an attitude of awareness is possibly the explanation of many rites that have been

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discarded as nonsense by the modern rationalist.

In Southern India, and in the Himalayas, snake worship is still performed to cure disease and to bring rain. The snake priest (who usually has a sacred snake near the temple, which he feeds) is accustomed to throw himself into a trance by inhaling smoke and in this condition to utter strange words which are taken to be prophecies. Probably his disjointed words are unconsciously moulded by his listener into some kind of message.

A man who wishes children goes through the following elaborate ceremony. He helps the priest to make the image of a snake out of dough. Mantrams are said before it. A mantram, according to the explanation of Tantric ritual, is a form of words used in the following way : the worshipper first meditates upon the Devata (the god) and then arouses the god in himself, meaning the particular god appropriate to the occasion. He then communicates the divine presence thus aroused to the object to be worshipped, by the appropriate mantram, or ritual of

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words. When the Devata has been summoned to the form to be worshipped, this form, an image perhaps, or a symbolic diagram, is no longer gross matter veiling the spirit which has potentially *always been there*, but is now thought to be instinct with the aroused presence of the divinity. This divinity, the Sadhaka who performs the rite first welcomes and then worships. After the worship is done he mentally withdraws the deity into himself. When the snake image has thus been brought into life by the charm or mantram, milk and sugar are offered to it, and it is worshipped. Other mantrams then take away the life that was given. The worshipper mourns for the dead snake, takes its holy body to a river, and reverently burns it on a pyre of sandalwood and camphor with melted butter and fire brought from his own house. The snake's ashes after three days are thrown into the river, and during these days the performer of the ceremony is held to be unholy. At the end of this time, he feasts eight unmarried youths of the neighbourhood, whom he calls *serpents*.

Vogel, who describes this ceremony in

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Indian Serpent Lore or the Nagas in Legend and Art, supposes that it is intended to be an expiation for an unintended killing of a snake in some former life. The killer was on this account cursed with barrenness in his present life. According to this view the mimic snake is fed and worshipped and suitably mourned when dead and eight young *snakes*, the boys, are feasted. The honour offered to this snake cancels the insult and wrong done to the other snake.

The ceremony might be interpreted in other ways. The snake, as in the dream phantasies studied by the psycho-analysts, could stand for the phallus, the principle of fertility, which must be propitiated, and the eight unmarried boys might be supposed to represent the same idea of unspent manhood. Or an interpretation analogous to that which Lawrence ascribes to the Hopi Snake Dance is easily credible. The barren man has somehow lost his touch with the living powers to whom the snakes, the mysterious ones, are so near. Let him make friends then, not with a real snake (and this seems significant) but with a little snake god, whom he and

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the priest, wise in such lore, make between them. The mantram with its sacred formula, repeated in the prescribed way, calls on the power of life within the barren man to arise, live and pour itself into the snake image. By this emotional concentration and brooding the living principle becomes embodied in the idol of the snake. It is fed with milk, the food of love, and sugar, pleasant to snakes. The divinity is then withdrawn and returned to the worshipper, who pays the burial rites to the now empty and therefore dead image of the snake, using the costly materials sacred to Hindus, sandalwood, camphor and butter. He then reveres the principle of life and fertility in the boys, his neighbours, who represent potential fatherhood.

Fraser would describe this ceremony as pseudo-science, based on the wrong premise that a physical disability might be due to the malign power of a metaphysical snake who must be propitiated. Although it is possible that some such idea may at times be present in the *conscious* mind of the practitioner of magic and religion (the prayer to an angry god, as used in Christian churches, is parallel,

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the consciousness in man of his identity with the vital forces in nature.

Among the Ainu of the Japanese island of Yesso a baby bear cub is captured, suckled by one of the women and carefully fed until it is grown up and threatens to break its cage. Then the people address it as child and brother, saying that the time has now come when it must die for the tribe, and asking its pardon. They call it their little god and the women weep and mourn for it. It is then killed by strangling and its boiled flesh eaten in a sacramental meal by all the people. The bear's head is worshipped and they feign to give it some of its own meat to eat. They beg it to go away to its Father and ask Him to bestow good fortune upon the tribe and to return that it may again be slain.

Numerous customs of this kind show a particular attitude among savages towards their food. The animal's life is not different from the life of man, and when animals are eaten it must be with respect and reverence and it is suitable to offer them an apology. Some are considered too holy to eat, although

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there are cases when a sacred animal is sacrificed once a year and his flesh eaten by the tribe. Dangerous animals such as crocodiles and tigers are not interfered with unless they offer the first injury. If a crocodile kills a man the tribe of crocodiles is summoned to deliver up the murderer. A crocodile is caught and killed, after which the injury is considered to have been expiated. The natives of Bengal make a point of going to traps set by foreigners for tigers and assuring the listening spirits of the tigers that they had no part in the deed.

Fraser's conclusion that magic is an unsuccessful science is not an adequate interpretation of these ceremonies. The nurture and subsequent killing of the bear cannot be intended primarily to secure a supply of bear's meat for food. It is the divinity of the bear that is the significant part of the proceeding.

The Ainu appear never to kill an animal without offering it an apology. Some tribes go so far as to assure the dead beast that they did not kill it, some one else did, or they assert that it met its death by accident. They

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retain an awe, fresh and living, in striking contrast to the brutality and insensitiveness often shown by game hunters, and here the savage and the most highly civilized meet in feeling.

CHAPTER IV

THE GRAIL. THE MEDIÆVAL MAGICIAN

IF the value of magic as complementary to science is beginning to appear, it will be recognized how large a share of men's interest has always been directed to this side of reality. In choosing examples from different centuries it seems appropriate to speak of the Grail symbol.

According to the legend transcribed by Malory, the Grail, that holy vessel containing the blood of Christ, was treasured by Joseph of Aramathea and his descendants and brought to Britain. There it appeared at King Arthur's court, sliding on a sunbeam, and with its magic influence dispersed the company of the Knights of the Round Table. They left their places in the fellowship sworn to succour distressed virtue and to put down

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wrongdoers, they deserted their liege lord King Arthur, who wept full sore, saying, "Now I dare swear the most noble company of knights in the world is to be scattered and broken, for many of them shall we never again see with our earthly eyes." Though many of the knights turned back, Sir Percivale, Sir Launcelot and Sir Galahad, at least, continued in the quest of the Grail for years and finally Sir Percivale and Sir Galahad attained unto it. Both were fed with the blood of God and Sir Galahad was taken up into heaven, but Sir Launcelot could not achieve the holy quest, because he was a sinful man and had never put Queen Guinevere wholly from his heart.

The Symbol of the Grail has a magic value not entirely Christian. It cannot really be identified with the communion cup of the mass and the Church has been suspicious of the legend. It has no place in her annals. Jessie Weston, *From Ritual to Romance*, sees in it a survival of an archaic ritual, one of the many forms under which the vegetation God, the God of life, was mourned as dead and welcomed as reborn. The spear dripping

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with blood which is thrust into the cup of the Grail, the maidens who weep, the maimed King in whose castle the Grail is found, are elements in the story which have no Christian parallels but which recall the rites of the Mediterranean, the wailing for Tammuz and Adonis. Miss Weston thinks that this ritual survives somewhere in the West of England and that the Grail actually exists. She feels that the purpose of the ceremony was probably to attain life more abundantly, to feel at one with the spirit who is continually dying and being born, not only in the physical world but in the creative forces of men.

The Grail is a symbol of the most abstract kind. Miss Weston may be right in relating it to the simpler rituals, which seem to endeavour to reinforce and create in the unconscious minds of the participants a feeling for the elementary facts of their life, such as the food supply, the fertility of the tribes, their success in war, their protection from the dangers of weather and of disease. But the Grail represented no material reward to those who sought it. It did not nourish the body, protect from danger, give strong

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sons of success in war. The knights of King Arthur's court, putting aside all else, left their duties and set off for some inexplicable bliss to be found in the achievement of a dream. This quest of the Grail might be called by Jung in his psycho-analytical terms, a "willed introversion." The structure of King Arthur's court might stand for the life of any thoroughly ethical modern who, as we see every day, finds his life dust and ashes because his unconscious emotions are starved. In such cases Jung recommends a deliberate turning towards other values, a plunge into the dark wood of the subconscious, a search for a grail whose meaning will be apparent only when attained.

To the Western mind the word magician usually calls up a confused picture of a mediæval magician such as Merlin learned in Gramarye, or a Kabalist, Alchemist, Rosicrucian, seeker after the philosopher's stone, dealer in poisons, love potions and horoscopes. The witch was his caricature. She rode upon a broomstick and concocted small and wicked spells.

Mediæval magic really differs very little

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from the magic of all countries, witness the magicians who threw down their rods before Pharaoh. Magic material is much the same from one age to another. The unconscious tends to express itself in the same forms.

In *The Greater Key of Solomon*, the book of Kabalistic magic, the earliest manuscripts of which date from the sixteenth century, is set forth the precise methods by which one may "render the angels familiar." These Celestial Creatures, destined some to regulate the movements of the stars, others to inhabit the elements, others to aid and direct man, and others to sing continually the praises of the Lord, will serve you provided you demand nothing from them "contrary to their nature" and provided that you enter upon the undertaking in all humility and purity of heart. To obtain the knowledge of magical arts and sciences it is necessary to have prepared the order of hours and days and the position of the moon and of the planets. The master and his disciples must fast for six days, reciting the following Conjunction once in the morning and twice in the evening :

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THE CONJURATION

O Lord God Almighty, be propitious unto me a miserable sinner, for I am not worthy to raise mine eyes unto heaven, because of the iniquity of my sins and the multitude of my faults. O pitying and merciful Father, who wouldst not the death of a sinner but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live, O God have mercy upon me and pardon all my sins ; for I unworthy entreat Thee, O Father of all Creatures, Thou Who art full of mercy and of compassion, by Thy great goodness, that Thou deign to grant unto me power to see and know these Spirits which I desire to behold and to invoke to appear before me and -to accomplish my will. Through Thee Who art Conqueror, and who are Blessed unto the Ages of the Ages. Amen.

On the seventh day, the master must enter into a secret place—and bathe himself from head to foot in consecrated and exorcised water—saying humbly and devoutly : “ O Lord Adonai, Who hast formed me Thine unworthy servant in Thine Image and

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resemblance of vile and of abject earth ; deign to bless and to sanctify this Water, so that it may be for the health and purification of my soul, and of my body, so that no foolishness or deceitfulness may therein in any way have place. O Most Powerful and Ineffable God, Who madest thy people pass dryshod through the Red Sea when they came up out of the Land of Egypt, grant unto me grace that I may be purified and regenerated from all my past sins by this water, that so no uncleanness may appear upon me in Thy Presence."

The master then dresses in white linen and calls his disciples. They fast for three more days, and the last three days should be calm weather, without wind and without clouds rushing hither and thither over the face of the sky. On the last day they wash again in a secret fountain of running water. The master says the confession and then in sign of penitence kisses each disciple upon the forehead, and each of them will kiss the other ; he will absolve and bless them. Then they carry the instruments necessary for the magical art, as perfumes, candles, knives,

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but the master himself must carry the staff, and the wand or rod. They then construct a magic circle according to the directions and following the diagrams.¹

These rituals, more and more debased, continue to survive in the doings of secret societies all over the world and it is interesting to trace this paraphernalia of magic back to early times and primitive peoples. Forlong, and others writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, relate magic practices to religious rites.² Forlong performs this task with great care, and was much scandalized by his discoveries. Sex (in the sense of life more abundantly) is perhaps the greatest of symbols, but the value of the symbol as an expression of emotion had not occurred to Forlong and his contemporaries. They wished religion to represent an ultimate, scientific statement of "truth," and as they found sex ideas at the basis of Christian symbols, they dismissed all Christian ritual as obscene and disgusting.

To return to our master magician, whom

¹ Note IV, page 137.

² *Rivers of Life*—Forlong.

CHAPTER V

HINDU RITUAL. VEDANTA AND RAJA YOGA. TAOISM

IN the Hindus we have an example of a civilized race who have preserved their primitive rituals in the life of the present day. The rites vary with the sects so numerous in the Indian Peninsula, from simple and brutal procedures, such as slaying of a black goat in sacrifice to Kali, to the delicate rite called consecrating the dusk. In this ceremony the Brahmin girls carry lights about the house at evening to welcome the return of night. The rituals of the Brahmins are innumerable—birth rites, naming ceremonies, ceremonies for rising in the morning, for bathing, and eating and fasting, initiation, marriage and death and funeral rites. Every Brahmin was until recently a priest with the power of performing all these ceremonies.

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Although the prescribed rites are so numerous there are also individual ones. The mother must study each child to teach it orally such parts of the stores of wisdom, learned from the lips of *her* mother, as are best suited to the needs and disposition of that particular child. A little girl makes idols of clay, without comment or rebuke from her elders, and worships what she has made until she tires of the crude form and tries again and again a new worship. It is hoped that she may find her own vehicle to express her own experience, and no means are too humble for so noble a search. Great freedom in experiment is allowed and even sought for, although so many means of emotional expression are already at hand in the numberless ceremonies. The rites are sufficiently varied to suit every temperament and perhaps provide some hours of Realization to each worshipper.

From the concrete worship of snakes and snake gods in the south (although we are told that the Indian peasant does not really worship idols, being aware that the image only stands for a power behind it) to the complete metaphysic of the Vedantist,

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perhaps the most logical abstraction known to man, all India is concerned in a search for a realization of life in its ultimate sources of feeling. It has been written of Rama Khrishna, the saint who died in 1886, Vivekananda's master, whose photograph is worshipped in the monasteries called by his name in Bengal :

“ Rama Khrishna Paramahansa is the worshipper of no particular Hindu god. He worships Shiva, he worships Kali, he worships Rama, he worships Khrishna and is a confirmed advocate of Vedantic doctrine. He is an idolater, yet is a faithful and most devoted meditator of the perfections of the one formless infinite deity. To him each of these deities is a force, an incarnated principle revealing the supreme relation of the soul to that eternal and formless Being who is unchangeable in his blessedness.”¹

Keyserling, a modern student of Indian thought, says : “ Not a single sage of India, not even Buddha, has opposed the popular belief in gods. They were so conscious, on the one hand, of the inexpressibility of

¹ *Theistic Quarterly Review*, October 1878.

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divinity and on the other hand, of the infinite number of possible manifestations, that generally they preferred the manifold expression to a single one. Belief is a means to a more rapid recognition, it has no other significance. For this reason it is a matter of indifference in principle what we believe in, whether what we believe is real—all concrete religious manifestations are of human origin.”

No doubt the Indian race has over-emphasized the religious, magic, emotional side of life, and has neglected the way of Martha, the path of scientific action. Yet nowhere, possibly, is the value and purpose of the symbol so well understood, so little confused with a notion that a ceremony is a primitive attempt at a scientific experiment. In the Rama Khrishna monasteries, devoted to work in eradicating malaria, to teaching and caring for the sick, where travellers are entertained without payment, the monks, some of them educated in Western universities, do not take their meal until the photograph of Rama Khrishna, enshrined in an upper room, has been offered its portion of the holy rice. How do these gentlemen

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understand the rite, senseless mummery as it seems to the less sympathetic of our missionary friends? They take it, apparently, with an amused tenderness. This is one way of preserving the *feeling* that the "elephant of piety" is still alive and among them. Not one of them, I am sure, supposes that the spirit of Rama Khrishna eats the rice, and even the simple Indian peasant and his prototype, the savage who makes rain charms and fertility spells, are more inclined than we can well understand to take their rites in somewhat the same way as do the present-day monks of Rama Khrishna.

The art of ritual as an education for the life of the emotions has been lost to the modern Western world, except perhaps in the Catholic Church, so that we have fallen emotionally to a low level, and as a nation are an easy prey to hysteric propaganda, Ku Klux Klans, and the more childish forms of secret societies.

Rama Khrishna himself is the type of the religious soul, embracing gladly all myths and all rituals that can contribute to the richness of the religious emotion. Not content with numerous Indian religions, he became and

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(curious as the fact is to a logical mind) seems to have remained a Christian and a Moham-medan, without renouncing his belief in the various sects of Hinduism. He meditated upon Christ until he believed himself to have had a vision of the pitiful son of Mary. His life of renunciation, his crowds of disciples, his various miracles, still vouched for by living men and women, and the legends that are springing up concerning him show him to have been a typical holy man. The lives of such men follow a fairly regular pattern and possibly the reason is that their emotional lives still have their sources in the collective unconscious.

It was said that Rama Khrishna had five ways of realizing God ; as His worshipper, His servant, His friend, His mother, and His lover. He said, " As long as there is the distinction of *I* and *Thou* name and form must remain. As long as we are obsessed with the idea of separateness God reveals Himself to us in various forms. But it is all His play." In one of these forms a divine child lived with Rama Khrishna, so he said, appearing in his room, sitting upon his knees

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and demanding to be fed, "with the loving importunity of an earthly little one." In this same spirit he worshipped the goddess Kali, the mother, who is both terrible and sweet, good and evil, preserver and destroyer. At first he could see only a living consciousness vibrating through the stone image of Kali, but later the stone image disappeared from his view and in its stead there stood "the living mother herself, smiling and blessing her son. I actually felt her breath on my hand. At night from my own room I could hear her going to the upper story of the temple with the delight of a girl, making a jingling sound with her anklets, and, to see if I was not mistaken, I came out to find her standing on the balcony with flowing hair." The Hindu mind, as illustrated by Rama Khrishna, has not entirely lost the myth-making faculty or limited truth to scientific cause and effect.

The great system of Tantric ritual is still followed. The worshipper, in these rites, first meditates upon the Devata, the God, and then arouses this god in himself. He then communicates this divine presence to the

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Tantra, a diagram to be worshipped by means of a mantram, a form of words or, as we should say, a charm. It is then no longer mere gross matter, it is instinct with the divinity—the spirit which has always been there although veiled. This spirit the Sadhaka welcomes and worships. He is to realize what they call the glory of the spouse in the love embrace of matter. The Tantra takes into its arms, as if they were its two children, both dualism and monism. In this ritual all antinomies are resolved. If sincerely performed it will produce faith in the mind of the Sadhaka as medicine cures diseases. It will control the Irrational, the realm of the emotions.

Vedantism (from the word Veda, the oldest religious book of the Hindus) is the metaphysical system upon which is founded the practice of Raja Yoga, or the technique by which realization of what is called Samadhi is attained. The characteristic of Samadhi is that it is indescribable, notwithstanding that much is written to describe it! It can probably be identified with the mystic experience of the saints of all religions. As

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Raja Yoga has for its aim the cultivation of a feeling so intense that the whole consciousness becomes changed, it falls under our definition of magic. Magic, as expressed in religious rite and symbol, is the creation or renewal and deepening of the primary emotions which serve to orient men towards the Irrational. Because of the loss or neglect and impoverishment of these feelings, the modern rational man is at a disadvantage in comparison with the primitive, religious man whose feelings seem to have been richer and also more consciously directed. Raja Yoga, with its intellectual background of Vedantism, seeks to preserve for the modern world this technique, the technique of the direction of feeling.¹

Vedantism is a metaphysical system. All human experience is called Maya, i.e., illusion. The idealism of Berkeley is the nearest Western parallel. The subjective nature of sense experience is recognized, the

¹ Much nonsense has been written about yogis and yogism. Educated Hindus warn Westerners against charlatans who offer opportunities to learn this art in a series of lectures.

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fact that we each have merely our personal sequence of sensations as the ultimate ground of our knowledge. Berkeley added a set of eternal verities that existed in the mind of God and believed that in this way his universe was "real." Vedantism, on the one hand, goes farther along the road of pure idealism and on the other leaves subjective experience on a more solid basis. To the Vedantist it is the polarity of subject and object which results in Maya, the sense experience is both true and false. It is an illusion, but an illusion that *exists*, as the image in a mirror exists. It is not possible to say that the image in the mirror is true or false—it is an image. On the one hand, Maya, the evidence of the senses, is an irreducible experience for every man. (It is a *part of the Irrational* because it is the uncaused, the given.) So on the other hand Brahma, the ultimate behind the veil, is *the* great irreducible experience. To induce this experience which calms all grief and fear is the aim of Raja Yoga.

Maya and Brahma are both sensuous experiences which depend on feelings that

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cannot be accounted for intellectually. The Vedantist says to the struggling soul, "Thou are That"—the individual is, has been and always will be at one with Brahma. The idea of separateness is part of Maya—a mistake, as a man in the half-light may mistake a coiled rope for a snake. As the sleeper dreams a world in sleep, a tiny sprout, so waking he dreams another world, this time a mighty tree, but still of the stuff of dreams. Time, space and causality, "name and form" are there because they are conceived and subject and object come into being together. The "why" and "whence" are forms of intellect. Bergson would say they are useful for the path of action but that they do not correspond with "reality."

The Vedantist holds that to ask "why" or "whence" of this world assumes in it a characteristic which it does not possess. As well might you ask whether the circle of fire produced by a whirling brand is a real circle. When the firebrand is at rest the circle is gone, so when you cease to ask the question the question disappears, there is no why, whence, whither. Any object of sense per-

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ception—for instance a spoon—creates a definite sensuous image. Yet if you consider this spoon according to the modern theory of the nature of matter as a system of electrically charged forces, can you ask whether the image of the spoon as it strikes your five senses is “real”? It is a real sense experience, a real image, like the rope-snake, the circle of fire or the reflection in the mirror. Maya, sense experience, depends upon the absolute Brahma ; its attributes are “illusion” (as the shape, weight, and so on of the spoon), but as only attributes can be known by the intellect that which sense experience is *in itself* cannot be *known*, it must be *felt*. The irreducible sense experience is compared with the irreducible ultimate experience ; the “attributes” which can be known are the intellectual abstractions. It is the reason that “knows.” But Reality must be felt, not known.

But, it may be objected, has not the Brahma, the absolute reality, still one quality or attribute left to it, that of standing behind or supporting all experience? To this it is answered, “We say that Maya is real on the

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authority of personal practical experience, so on the authority of the higher personal experience we say that the absolute is absolute, and that when the absolute is realized all these qualities of experience, all this time and space, and subject and object, this Maya, will vanish. From the standpoint of the absolute these qualities never existed, but from the standpoint of the qualities they depend upon the absolute." Sensuous experience, in fact, is a morphological form, an irrational entity, about which our intellect does and must continually create paradoxes to which it is futile to expect solution. Wisdom and peace lie in the experience of the absolute Brahma, the ultimate form, concealed from the worldly-minded but revealed to the Yogi in meditation.

We come now to Raja Yoga, the technique by which one may attain desirelessness. The East and West have a different end in view in studying philosophy. The Western student is urged to *think*, to learn to think, above all to think for himself. With the weapon of a sharpened intellect he is considered to be able to take any material which may come his

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way and to use it creatively. The Eastern seeker desires a new level of consciousness. He considers that the intellect moves in a self-limited sphere, the senses perceive sense impressions, the intellect perceives abstractions, and both together are the instruments of Maya. A different and higher level of consciousness is necessary to attain the realization of metaphysical truth—Brahma. The seeker after this wisdom endeavours to train his senses and to polish his intellect only provisionally. He wishes above all to alter the quality of what we might call his soul. The great instrument of the training in Yoga is meditation. Is not this the practice of what we have called magic?¹

The Chinese system of religious magic is Taoism. To the Chinese, as to the Indian, the absolute which accounts for his being is that which he learns by concentration of self, by completion of a practical effort. The Chinese mind, although pursuing its training by means of meditation and concentration, is averse to ritual in the abstract sense. The great philosophy of the Chinese, Taoism, is

¹ Note V, page 140.

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peculiarly suited to the national temperament. It is as subtle as the Chinese character itself. It is indeed easier to say what Taoism is not than what it is. It is not, as is sometimes thought, mere negation, passivity and non-action. It teaches simple humanity, purity of heart and freedom from worldly desires. There are unconscious followers of Tao in all ages and nations.

Most human ills have their origin in the use of the intellect, declares Lao-Tze, in the Tao-Teh-King. Lao-Tze was an old man when he wrote his book. Returning from the South, to make at last his home in his native North, he was detained long in one of the mountain passes, visiting a friend. There his wisdom, the accumulation of a long life of pondering upon unsatisfactory ideals, took shape. Lao-Tze held that artificial moralities are useless. Prescribed ceremonies and abstract virtues calm the surging passions of men, but only for a brief period. The ideal state is the condition of non-action. The Taoists believed that virtues like Benevolence, Knowledge and Faith, if artificially created, were streams that would soon run dry. The

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Sage, according to the Tao-Teh-King, wears the appearance of simplicity, indifferent alike to happiness or distress. His senses occupy a subordinate place, they are harmonized with his spirit. He is armed at every angle.

Tao is progressive intelligence, the élan vital, the unseen life, consciousness. Tao is life, infinite, inexhaustible, always in motion. Tao gives life, Teh gives form, but Teh returns always to Tao and is sent forth again. Water, says Lao-Tze, is like Tao, for

“ Water blesses all things,
Yet it does not hurt them.
It loves the lowly places that men dislike.”

Water too is always flowing ; it is very like Tao. Tao is a magical master of change, giving to the formless a mysterious urge toward expression in form, toward an evolution leading to perfection. “ We do not conquer environment by action but by intuition, as animals do by instinct. Renounce learning. It brings loss to the inner life. How slight the difference between yea and nay.”

The Taoists cultivated a state of religious

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trance. They used breathing exercises, employed gymnastic imitations of the steps of the bear, the fluttering of birds, the glare of the owl, the concentration of the tiger. In terms of modern psychical science they induced a state of ecstasy by self-imposed hypnotism. They understood the great untapped reservoirs of power in the mind.

CHAPTER VI

CONVERSION. KEATS AND TOLSTOY

THOUGH conversion is not a rite it is a form of expression, a constellation of the emotions peculiar to an individual, and belongs therefore to the order of magic truths.

The conversion phenomenon is capricious. It may not happen. Many of the New England Puritans never joined the Church as members because the inner call, the conversion, did not come, although they waited year after year. The psycho-analyst explains conversion as a sudden influx of unconscious material into consciousness. St. Paul for instance, though consciously he was persecuting the Christians, was receiving from them a mass of unconscious impressions, a *magic* that powerfully affected his emotional life, and at a given moment this burst through

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into his conscious life as a vision, a heavenly voice.

The uncertain nature of sudden conversion, with its undesirable features such as hysterical revival meetings, in which convulsive seizures of various kinds masquerade as conversions, shows again the wisdom of the ritual. In ritual emotion is taught to flow into definite symbols of value and dignity.

J. M. Murry's *Keats and Shakespeare* is concerned with what we may call Keats' conversion. In a letter to his brother George, written April 30, 1819, Keats described his religion. Using a symbolic language peculiar to his own experience, he explains a modern type of conversion and defends intuition and magic as of value, of much more value, in his opinion, than the products of reason.

After many struggles and some endeavour to follow the intellectual path (identified for him with Milton) Keats resolved that he could best meet the troubles of his life, his sickness and his disappointed love, by "submitting to life, that life might be glorified through him." He would "make his heart the Bible of his mind"—he would trust his

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emotions and submit to be in doubts and uncertainties without "any irritable reaching out after fact and reason," until he could solve these problems by the faculty of poetic intuition. Shakespeare, he believed, was possessed of what he called "negative capability." This negative capability Murry identifies with forgiveness or acceptance (what a Hindu would call realization). "In trying to grasp essential reality we must be prepared at any moment to reconcile apparent contradictions not by an arbitrary and enforced accommodation of one to the other, but by a deeper perception that can reach to the reality that evades direct expression." That is a good description of Samyama, the brooding of the magician. Keats invented the expression "diligent indolence" for contemplation, and "organic knowledge" for intuitive perception, "a shaping of the soul by a true contact with reality, a thing which can be uttered only by the language of poetry." Man must be utterly loyal to immediate and unintellectual experience, to the passions, to the affections, to the intuitions; by this loyalty will be created the soul, and

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the soul Keats defined as "the possession of a sense of identity." J. M. Murry comments on Keats' theories and says: "The non-rational thought of pure poetry and the rational thought which reaches to absolute perfection in mathematics, are not exclusive but complementary. Pure mathematics is concerned with structure, poetry with being. They present the fundamental harmony under its two real aspects." Possibly two of its real aspects would be a more accurate expression.

It was just after writing this letter that Keats is said to have really entered into the possession of his own poetic faculties and to have written his great odes. The letter is a symbolic account of the soul of the artist and his method, which we believe is also the method of the magician. It is a long way from the Indian corn dance to Keats' "Ode to Autumn," and yet are not both clear examples of the spirit of man seeking to comprehend the living mystery by the faculty of poetic intuition, as opposed to fact and reason; by magic, as opposed to science?

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There is a kind of conversion described by Tolstoy in two of his novels. Levin in *Anna Karenina* is represented as an unsatisfied nervous young man, capricious in his interests, critical of himself and his surroundings, moody and unhappy. These characteristics continue more or less even after his very successful marriage, until rather suddenly one day, Levin finds, during a walk in the fields, that he is calm and happy. He realizes and accepts the fact that he will never live perfectly, that he will continue to lose his temper and find fault with other people and afterwards will be miserable and blame himself for so doing, but the feeling of peace persists. We are not told what combination of emotions brought about the change in Levin which amounted to a definite conversion.

In *War and Peace*, it is the peasant, Platon Karatayef, a fellow-prisoner in a soldiers' camp, whose personality converts Pierre Bezukhöi. Platon is full of simple unconscious wisdom and love, like the Pilgrim in Gorky's *Lower Depths*, or Alyosha in Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazoff*. After

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knowing Platon the much-troubled Pierre, who had travelled through all the sensuous and intellectual experiences of his time, acquired a different feeling towards life. He was able to conquer his fits of shyness, his agony of indecision, if he said to himself : " What would Platon have done under these circumstances ? "

I do not remember any such conversion described in an English novel. The Russian is richer in emotional life than the Anglo-Saxon and he values emotion much more highly. The Russians seem unreasonable to us to whom reason almost coincides with truth and reality. The characters in Chekov's plays are entirely uninfluenced by causes ; nothing exterior affects them. They seem to grow and change, if at all, by some inner law of their nature, as the atom does according to Chinese philosophy.

CHAPTER VII

YEATS. MODERN MAGIC

W. B. YEATS, the poet and playwright, has made a serious study of magic. The description of his magical theories and practices is taken from his book, *The Trembling of the Veil*, published in 1927. Yeats' explanation of the spells and charms which he believes that he and his friends have made successfully, is akin to Jung's idea of the collective unconscious. Yeats holds that certain forms or symbols have acquired a definite meaning to the unconscious mind in which we all have a share, and form a language that is understood by what he calls "the dark side of the mind."

Yeats met McGregors Mathers, author of *The Kabala Unveiled*, and in 1887 joined a society, The Hermetic Students, of which Mathers was president. Mathers' procedure

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was to paint Kabalistic symbols upon pieces of cardboard which, when held to the forehead, produced it was said an appropriate vision. Mathers believed that he had merely to think the symbol and see the vision, and Yeats says that he also acquired this power.¹

At about this time while he was studying magic, Yeats, walking on the seashore, would imagine a symbol and his uncle, walking on a cliff at a distance, "would practically never fail of the appropriate vision." This experiment was deliberately undertaken. Yeats also experimented with other people and concluded that the symbol, painted on a card and held to the forehead, actually produced the vision—"for if I made an error and gave the wrong card the vision would be suggested by the symbol, not by my thought; or two visions, one from my thought and one from the symbol, would arise." If two people worked with one symbol the reverie, which sometimes appeared as a dream, would divide itself between them. While Yeats and his uncle worked, an old Irish servant in the house, who had the

¹ Note VI, page 149.

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second sight, would dream in her sleep a kind of caricature of the vision. Yeats says he induced a man with whom he was in conversation to describe a fire, by thinking intently about the fire symbol. He cured his uncle of a fever, he thought, by imagining the symbol for water and told him to bid the "red dancing figures" of which he complained in his delirium to "go in the name of the Archangel Gabriel."

Yeats called the collective unconscious, the world soul, by the name of Anima Mundi. It seemed to him that the dreams and thoughts of country people were like the visions he called up by means of his Kabalistic symbols. When a man creates, Yeats held, he does so from "some knowledge or power beyond his conscious mind," something akin to the instinct of a bird. The man's creative power must be started by what Yeats called an *image* as the bird's instinct to build a nest is released by the sight of a bundle of twigs. The image or mask, as he calls it, can work strongly upon men, for "from what but the Image of Apollo, fixed always in memory and passion, did his priesthood get that

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occasional power of lifting great stones or snapping great branches?" "Genius is a crisis that joins the buried self for certain moments to our trivial daily mind."

Yeats felt that what men seek from the unconscious is their *own opposite*. (This is like Jung's Transcendent Function.) Unity of Being, creating by finding one's own opposite, may be sought, intellectually and critically, "as by Goethe," but "true unity of being, where all nature murmurs in response if but a single note be touched, is found emotionally, instinctively, by the rejection of all experience not of the right quality and by the limitation of its quantity."

So to Yeats true unity of being, attained emotionally, is released by what he called the image, which we have suggested may be the spell or ceremony. To the bird the sight of the twigs acts as a spell which reinforces and releases the bird's unconscious power and sends it happily along the nest-making path. So the ritual of the corn dance may release the primitive's will to live, to continue to rejoice in his mysterious means of life. To minds that lived simply in the present, with

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no vivid forethought and no imaginative picture of the future, the corn dance may have served the purpose which the twigs effect in the case of the bird. Perhaps it awakened and concentrated the tribe's unconscious memory of the purpose of the fields and set the primitive to tilling the ground or, if the hunting dance was his "Image," sent him out after game in much the same instinctive way as that in which the birds build their nests. It made him want to hunt or fight or cultivate the ground, it put his "libido" (his life-energy) behind it. The primitive with a dammed-up or divided libido would simply starve; the modern in such a case becomes a neurasthenic.¹

This is Yeats' idea of how the spell worked. "My friends believed that the dark portion of the mind (the subconscious) had an incalculable power, and even over events. To influence events and one's mind one had to draw the attention of that dark portion, to turn it as it were into a new direction. One repeated certain names and drew or imagined certain symbolic forms which had acquired a

¹ Note VII, page 149.

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precise meaning, not only to the dark portion of one's own mind but to the mind of the race." This is Yeats' explanation of magic, a language familiar to the subconscious race memory through which, if we know it, we can speak to the collective unconscious which he thought had foreknowledge of the future and even power over it. Whether sound or not, this is a theory to account for the sooth-sayer and prophet the world over.

The Trembling of the Veil, Yeats' autobiography, is unfinished. His prominent position as a man of letters has made it seem worth while to repeat his experiences and views for what they are worth.

We turn to Christian Science as a system of suggestion, a modern magic. Christian Science works its healing very simply. Certain formulas which are bound up with Christian ideas and phrases (already having a semi-magic value for many people) are repeated often enough to reach the unconscious emotions and then the healing takes place. The control of the imagination over bodily functions, especially over circulation and digestion, is too familiar to need comment.

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Christian Science does not often reach minds whose thoughts are crystallized into conscious logical forms nor those emotionally wedded to scientific ideas, nor perhaps those which are æsthetically fastidious. To such the magic of Christian Science is no magic. It cannot reach their unconscious emotion, guarded in various ways against this form of spell. To others the formula that evil is non-existent, that God made only good and that any other idea is error, seems to release the emotions of hope and feelings of health, and to exorcise the demons that make for illness. The exasperation with which some people hear the statement that scarlet fever is an error is really misplaced. "Scarlet fever is an error" is not a logical statement, it is a spell intended to induce an emotional mood which may help the sufferer.

Couéism is more acceptable to many. Coué used a device similar to Chevreuil's pendulum,¹ to convince his patients that the imagination worked on the body, and then taught them, by the simplest formulas, unconnected with related ideas, to get rid of

¹ Note VIII, page 150.

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the particular pain or worry of the moment. They simply repeated "Ca-passe" (It is going away) very rapidly. Coué's theory was that the imagination could be so filled with the idea of lessening pain that there would be no room for an opposite idea. He also used the technique of the law of reversed effort, brought to his notice, I believe, by Baudoin, a law so important for the magician. This means that when the will and imagination are brought into conflict the imagination will always win. It is the imaginative *picture* of one's self as well, not the *will* to be well, that does the trick, and illness and depression are often caused by the untamed and undisciplined imagination, which feeds itself on ideas of illness and which is too sympathetic with others' woes. We may substitute for the idea of will the idea of stiffness, of denial. The wrong technique is to make an imaginative picture of your illness, a fine one, and then strenuously deny it or stiffen towards it. The right way is to make a picture of health and then dismiss it from one's mind because one believes it with perfect faith. Those healed by Jesus are supposed to have had this

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faith. A clear imaginative picture of the desired result combined with relaxation of the body, is the way in which games are skilfully played, gymnastic feats performed, and belongs to the technique of the musician or artist, and indeed to any delicate manipulation of the body so rapid that it must be accomplished unconsciously. In teaching, an enormous power lies in keeping the imagination of the pupil on the right path, never, if possible, allowing him to picture the undesirable. The actual accomplishment of piano playing (or even tight-rope walking) lies in a definite imaginative picture accompanied by relaxation. A stiffening, an effort of will, would spoil all.

The numerous personality schools whose advertisements reach us through the mail and the healers who announce themselves in the Saturday papers, all these folk have somewhere a modest and homely bit of magic, diluted though it may be. Why should we complain that their talk is offensive to reason? It is not to the reason that they appeal. They have some odds and ends of what in its best estate was great magic. They seek by hook

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or crook to effect the irrational emotions, the reservoir of much power and happiness.

A potent magic, which has come down the ages undiminished in value, is ridicule. We mock at the unfamiliar and so drive away the sense of fear and inferiority which its strangeness evokes in us. The fear of ridicule has a magic power to enforce uniformity of dress, speech and behaviour and, in nobler uses, ridicule waves its wand to prevent pretence and pettiness. Bergson says we laugh at that which resembles a machine. When two men are exactly alike we are amused at the machine-like duplication. When a skater, who should convey a feeling of freedom and power, jerks his arms and legs as if a string were pulled, we feel as if we were watching the performance of a machine. The machine, to Bergson, represents the antithesis of life. Our ridicule of the machine-like skater is our tribute to the spontaneity and freedom of life. Charlie Chaplin is armed with all the magic power of humour. He makes us laugh with his machine-like awkward walk and we are disarmed by his helplessness and inferiority, for *we* can walk properly. So we are all the

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more open to conversion when his love and tenderness touch us. The party in "The Gold Rush," the toilette of the baby in "The Kid," or Charlie himself continuing to exhort, from a recumbent position, the man who has knocked him down, these little pictures can never be forgotten, they are magic. Charlie, as the divine fool, teaches again that blessed are the meek.

CHAPTER VIII

BEHAVIOURISM

WHAT can we do with behaviourism, the latest panacea, which some think is to supersede religion, philosophy and psychology, and lay the basis for a really working system of ethics, free from superstition, taboo or supernatural authority? Is it entirely inconsistent with the theory of magic?

Briefly, Watson, Pavlov, and their followers have undertaken experiments to prove the following facts, incontrovertible as far as they go. The dog's (or the child's) mouth waters, (1) when he is eating; (2) when he sees food; (3) when (after an interval for the training of the association) he experiences any stimulus, vocal, tactual or visual, which has been continually associated with his feeding time. It is believed that infants show fear only at loud noise and lack of support. They

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are not naturally, that is by inheritance, afraid of animals, fur, and so on. Watson conditioned a child to fear a rabbit by associating the sight of the rabbit with a loud noise and reconditioned the child, that is, removed the child's fear of the rabbit, by leaving off the noise and gradually associating the rabbit with the child's feeding time.

From these simple experiments Watson believes he has established these principles : he classifies human actions as manual, visceral and *verbal*, stating that we think only with words or word substitutes such as gestures. All these are reactions to physical stimuli. They are simple reflexes, or else they are conditioned reflexes, the conditioned reflex having been built upon the simple reflex. The dog's mouth waters at the sound of a bell after he has for some time been fed only when the bell rang. That is a conditioned reflex. Psychology is to dispense with concepts such as the stream of consciousness, the will, the intellect, the emotions and, by substituting a system of conditioned reflexes, build up a real science of human behaviour.

This is cause and effect with a vengeance,

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but perhaps the cause is stretched rather far.

Kohler¹ in his experiments with apes came to conclusions different from those of Watson and quite as worthy of respect and attention. He gave the apes various problems such as ways to find their food. For instance, a banana was hung so high that the ape could get it only by putting one object on another and standing on the two to reach the banana. Kohler found that the ape solved the problem not by trial and error, but by a kind of sudden "hunch" or blossoming of the idea in the ape's mind. The animal did not get nearer and nearer the problem by discarding useless ways of behaving and it did not reach the solution by chance, it solved the problem suddenly and correctly. This is the so-called "Gestalt" theory also expounded by Koffka.

In Kohler's experiment we may perhaps see a type of primitive thought, an intellectual reaction occurring for the first time. The sudden solutions which his apes produced

¹ *The Mentality of Apes.* W. Kohler, trans. Ella Winter. See especially Chapter on "The Handling of Forms."

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cannot possibly be explained by behaviourist theories. The understanding of a complicated situation which *he had never met before*, evinced by the ape, seems also to call for a reconsideration of the doctrine that the intellectual faculties have been acquired by a slow evolutionary process, the survival of useful variations produced by an accidental combination of favourable circumstances. Kohler disclaims any theory as to the nature of intelligence : "insight" is the word he uses. He says merely that autochthonous possibilities exist in the animal and that the solutions may arise autonomously, not necessarily from experience. In fact Kohler seems to admit the possibility of an irrational uncaused phenomenon, a morphological form in Spengler's sense. The behaviourists, on the other hand, claim to build up the structures of human conduct with a series of inadequate little causes.

Nevertheless, no one can deny the truth or the usefulness of Watson's experiments and, instead of commenting impolitely upon the behaviourist's ignorance of primitive psychology, his misinterpretation of psycho-analysis

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and his small-town notion of the artist and his work, I should like to note the contribution which his theories make to the study of psychology, and so, indirectly, to the study of magic.

The expression "visceral reaction" seems to be particularly accurate and helpful. Visceral training is probably a better expression than emotional training for much of the feeling that the primitive tried to create in his ritual dances. When he leaped for the corn, no doubt the idea presented of food to come did make the mouth water and the intestines react in a way that added to the well-being, the feeling of joy of the participants, and probably of the spectators of the dance. The primitive (though Watson gives no evidence of knowing anything about him, and would probably reject the comparison) is like the baby in that he has not yet verbalized his responses. Possibly primitive spring festivals may be accurately, though not elegantly, described in the Behaviourist tongue as wholesale un verbalized conditioned responses of the tribe to the approach of summer and food. It is imaginative anticipa-

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tion that makes the dog's mouth water at some symbol which to him means feeding. So the imaginative anticipation, if properly "conditioned" by the priest or the magician, may cause healing, inspire any mental or physical reaction such as pain, fear, joy and also hallucinations of all kinds. Through mystical participation, or mob psychology, any of these effects may be produced, not only in the individual, but in the tribe. Watson takes one of these manifestations into account. He is not interested. Religion and magic are to him the result of poor conditioning, of fears which must, I suppose, be ultimately traced to loud noises and lack of support! We find in man a complicated mass of feelings—badly conditioned visceral responses, says the behaviourist—maladjustment of the conscious and the unconscious, says the psycho-analyst. Why is it not entirely possible that both explanations fit the facts? There is nothing in psycho-analytical methods, as employed by Freud at least, that should so disturb Watson. The un verbalized forgotten fear of the little child is brought into verbalization (made conscious,

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Freud would say) and by that fact the subject loses his fear ; he is re-conditioned. Behaviourism comes in very nicely here. Perhaps behaviourism is an example of the way in which a science, of such priceless value in the rational field, occasionally overruns itself and stretches a cause to cover too many facts while it loudly denies the existence of facts for which the cause cannot be made to account.

CHAPTER IX

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

IN certain cases of both physical and mental illness the sufferer's natural sense of security, power, and pleasure in life, is replaced by one of helplessness and inferiority. This inferiority is compensated for in several ways, such as by a nervous illness which draws attention to the sufferer, by boasting, by exaggerated interest in one side of life. Adler (who is called a Psycho-analyst, but seems to have much in common with the behaviourists) considers that a weakly physical constitution, an underpowered heart for instance, or a very difficult birth, accounts for the inferior feeling of an individual. Freud holds that some unpleasant impression received in childhood is so shocking to the conscious mind as to be pushed out of sight into the unconscious and that the psychical energy, the libido, is

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unable to divert itself entirely from this "complex," this forgotten wound. Therefore the supply of this energy is insufficient for the full life of the subject. The conflict ignored by the conscious mind is expressed in dreams, the language of the unconscious. Freud discovered that by working with his patients over dream material and its verbal associations, he could get them to recollect the occurrence, the forgotten wound, which when recollected and taken into adult consciousness proved to be a cure for the divided libido.

Freud and his school seem to have gone much too far in attempting to give an arbitrary interpretation to dreams. For a few years a real dream dictionary threatened, in which horses, snakes, water, caves, stairs, were given a definite and definitely unpleasant meaning. The incest complex, so overworked, was probably a reflection of some difficulty belonging to Freud himself and as such was read by him into the dreams of his patients. It is now the procedure to allow a patient to interpret his own dreams. The dream is his own unconscious poem,

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symbol or myth, and only his own associations with it have any significance for him.

There is at present a division in the psycho-analytical schools. Jung of Zurich is considered by his Vienna confrères to have left the scientific path and to have gone over into mysticism. Before entering upon this divergence of view, let us consider the general conception of the collective unconscious. This is an hypothesis—an X. The unconscious is the region of all non-conscious activities: the digestive and glandular, the involuntary or “unstriped” muscular and the instinctive, in both animals and man. To it we may refer the uncanny behaviour of insects as studied by Fabre, the migrations of the birds and of the lemmings. The collective unconscious expresses itself in the symbolism found in dreams (and occasionally in the improvised games of little children), as well as in the great myth-making faculty, the creation of symbols characteristic of all races. The archetypal images, that is the recurrent primitive mythical motives found in dreams, are considered to be an inherited method of understanding or apprehending the object

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emotionally and in symbolic form, just as instinct is on this theory an inherited mode of action.

Unconscious psychical energy seems to be more at the disposal of some individuals than of others. The problem with the Jung School is how to enter into possession of the full measure of psychical power through the conscious understanding of its unconscious workings.

The dream to Freud is merely the statement by the personal unconscious of a personal difficulty, often a primitive and incestuous sex desire, censored by the conscious mind of the civilized person and so driven into his unconscious. To Jung the dream is a statement in terms of feeling and symbol of the whole pattern of the dreamer's life. The dream makes use at times of the archetypal images, the racial language of the collective unconscious. The dream has a kind of prophetic value. It may symbolically suggest a course of action. It may indicate some undesirable attitude, especially an over-emphasis on the part of the individual of the conscious orientation of his waking life. It is

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at this point that Jung disagrees with the Freudians. Where Freud would find a definite meaning in a dream, probably a hidden sex desire, Jung might interpret the same dream as a message from the collective unconscious, or rather a stirring of the share of unconscious emotion belonging to an individual, which Jung would think the dreamer might learn to read and interpret.

It is here that psycho-analysis approaches our study of magic. The dream is an archaic form of consciousness approximating in a high degree the consciousness of primitive man and reasserting itself under conditions of sleep. Consciousness, the region where science and the laws of cause and effect have their place, uses the abstract spoken word as its medium. The unconscious, the region of feeling, the region which we have called magic, uses in rites and symbols of all kinds another sort of language, and this language is considered by the psycho-analysts to survive in dreams. As the myth, expressed in the ritual, is the collective dream or magic of the tribe, so your dream is your individual

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magic, your symbolic expression of irrational or feeling values. The actual archaic images that the followers of Jung claim to find in dreams are an extraordinarily interesting study. Are they due to the inheritance of certain emotional habits, as the digestion of food and other such unconscious activities are due to the inheritance of habits of bodily action?

If the dream is an individual magic, a private spell, how is it to be read? The remembered dream is carefully written down and then studied for its free associations, what it reminds you of, while you hold your mind as passive as possible and let phantasy and imagination work "dreaming" over the dream material. The emotional value of dreams is very great; witness the earnestness with which the farrago of a dream, nonsense to the listener's ear, will be recounted by most people. It is nonsense to their own conscious waking ears, but in some way it is precious nonsense.

The technique gradually emerging from the studies and experiments of Jung has a place not only in the relief of neurasthenia,

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in which the emotionally unbalanced are helped to regain their equilibrium, but in the life of any one who follows an art. One is encouraged to pay attention to dream and phantasy, because from them emerge the symbol, sometimes clothed in a definite mythical form, and at other times as a deep emotional interest in some pursuit or idea, for which one cannot give a rational explanation. The psycho-analysts aim at a "conversion," a readjustment of emotion.

Jung finds a tendency in moderns to overspecialize, to emphasize the conscious attitude unduly, to be too much one kind of a person, so that the other side of the individual's nature, what Jung calls the inferior function, is thrust deeply into the unconscious and takes an archaic form which reappears with a startling inconsistency in the life of the individual. Therefore highly organized natures from time to time behave in a way that is totally out of character. The kindest of people are irresistibly impelled to make spiteful remarks. Attention to the inferior function can sometimes be found a help. An intellectual may try to strengthen his powers

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of feeling and an emotional person his thinking faculties. Jung encourages his patients, or rather his pupils (as not all those who study his methods are ill, nervously or otherwise), to attempt to draw or paint their dreams and phantasies, or to write about them, with the idea that possibly the store of unconscious emotion which is the source of art forms may be consciously released. Art is a dream expressing itself in a material form, in paint, stone, words, music, and so on.¹ Possibly modern art foreshadows the birth of another "culture," to use Spengler's phrase, the beginning of a relative space sense. Does a relative space sense lie behind the so-called distortion of modern painting and the atonic writing of modern music? Perhaps we have come to the end of the "Faustian" era, its system of perspective and its sense of infinite space.

The Myth of the Mother, terrible and beautiful, is the symbol that emerges most

¹ Thorburn says it is the material element which seems to hypnotize the artist, prevent him from waking, and releases his unconscious, so that at times he works without conscious direction or effort. *Art and the Unconscious*.

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clearly in psycho-analytical studies. It is an example of an archaic image still potent in dreams, a spell that still works. Freud says in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that each creature seeks above all its own death, its rest. The natural physical inertia of bodily cells makes any outgoing action a tremendous effort which can only be overcome by a greater stimulus. So each creature seeks to be as it was before, seeks in a sense the mother's womb, for there is deep in the physical tissue a resentment against birth, the entrance into a harsh and separate world. In natures not successfully adjusted this feeling develops into the dread of growing up—the desire to remain a child. A certain recoil before the new responsibility of adolescence (or the undertaking of any new duty) is natural—a little pause to collect oneself—but some natures never really accept any responsibility. They have a mother-fixation, a complex which was expressed by the myth-making faculty of the Greeks in the story of *Œdipus*. Myths of gods who are at once the sons and the husbands of their virgin mothers also witness this feeling. In dreams this

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unconscious fear is personified as the Terrible Mother, a dread goddess who is desired, and yet must be avoided. Sometimes the dream is an archaic symbol, at others it is merely the dream of the death of a particular human mother, probably over-idolized by the conscious mind. The immense mass of feeling connected with the mother as both good and evil, giver of life and devourer, is an example of the polarity of primitive emotion. The divine sources of life have this dual character to the American Indian. He reveres them, but is on his guard against them. To the savage, divinity is also taboo. The hero of the typical myth makes a journey back to the sources of life, is swallowed by a whale, journeys under the sea and rescues a maiden (symbolic of his new attitude toward life) from the jaws of a dragon.

The Terrible Mother, from whom we all spring, is the undifferentiated source of emotion and symbol, deeper and older than reason and speech, and to remain peacefully within her womb in mystical participation is only for the primitive man, and for the little child ; but adults, the heroes, must free

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themselves from her although they may return again and again by dream and symbol and willed introversion to drink of her wisdom.

Jung's method of reading dreams may be considered the process of private magic, as distinguished from collective magic, which is the rite as practised by the primitives. Primitives are truly members of one another. They feel collectively, but the modern must read his own dreams and find his solitary symbol. Private magic has always aimed, as Eliphas Levi held, to reach the subconscious of the magician. His spell is largely for his own benefit. The calling of the Deity from within practised in the Tantric ritual, the elaborate magic of the Kabala with its prayers, fastings, washing, the practice of crystal gazing, the interpretation of the rustling oak leaves at Dodona, all these set up an imaginary chain of cause and effect which lulls the suspicious conscious so that the unconscious can function. The appearance of cause and effect is illusory. Such verbal and mental categories as cause and effect have no place, for in essence the magician's world

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is just the world where these laws do not hold.

To sum up the process of psycho-analysis : difficulty, fear, dissatisfaction, discouragement, are inevitable in the civilized, especially at adolescence and menopause. Simple natures, still in the stage of *participation mystique*, and people whose physical struggle for existence is so keen that it absorbs their emotional energy, avoid this struggle. The physical hardship of camping and exploring is sometimes even sought as a release from the life of civilization. These difficulties of adjustment are to be met by a willed introversion, a return to the Mother, to the place where all values are, so to speak, equal and undifferentiated. If the difficulty is due to a suppression of a part of your nature, the re-examination and revaluation of the unconscious (to find what you had better take along into conscious life) may be valuable. In this way you will discover your symbol. Moderns have lost the use of true magic which through ritual should give the support of the emotions to the life of man and in its place have left but a trick of magic

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which has retreated to holes and corners, to crystal gazing, fortune-telling, and the use of the ouija board, just as the old gods have descended to the estate of ghosts and fairies.¹

¹ Note IX, page 151.

CHAPTER X

EDUCATION AND MAGIC

THE definite training of the emotions, which is the object of magic and ritual, has been a recognized part of the education of primitive men and of some civilized races. The North American Indian boy was sent into the forest to fast and dream until a vision of an animal came to him, which was henceforth to be his sign. He added its name to his own, paid it reverence, and must not kill or eat it except with ceremony, since in this case he was killing and eating himself. Owing to the *participation mystique* of the primitive his dream was the dream of the tribe and as such had an accepted value in the eyes of his fellows.

Fraser gives a number of rites to be observed by girls at puberty, for at this time they were recognized as both divine and

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dangerous, magic and taboo. The rites of the primitive at adolescence were often brutal and revolting but they recognized an emotional change and provided a channel for its expression.

There is a story told by Mr. Michio Ito about his experience as a little boy, which is an example of an emotional training. He was seven years old when for a while he was sent to a Buddhist monastery in Japan. Every morning an old priest took the little boy to a place where only the hills, the sky and the sea were to be seen. Then he would say, pointing, "The ocean is deep, the mountain is high, the sky is far, far away." One day the child lost his sandal. He went to the priest saying, "My servant has lost my sandal. I shall scold him!" The priest smiled and said nothing. By and by the boy said, "But perhaps he did not mean to lose it. Perhaps I will not scold him!" Then the priest smiled and stroked his head. In a few days the little boy found the sandal where he had left it sticking in the stairs. He went to the priest and said, "I was wrong. I shall beg the servant's pardon—but why

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did you not tell me that I might be wrong ? ” This time the priest smiled and gave him a little cake. “ Three boys,” said he, “ are looking at you, Michio. One says Michio’s face is black, one says it is white, one says it is black and white. The first boy is standing behind you, the second in front of you, and the third at your side.”

When the priest repeated daily that the mountain was high it was the feeling called forth by the mountain, not its height in feet, its vegetation or mineral products that he wished to impress, and, in the little story of the lost sandal, it was the boy’s feeling, not his actions, which interested his instructor and guardian, the old Buddhist.

That the training of the emotions is also regarded as of the utmost importance in the life of the Hindu child, is illustrated by the behaviour of a lady who wished to begin to instruct her little boy in the Bhagavat-Gita. The child had been frightened by the sight of a mass of snakes coiling together in the garden, and his mother, with the wisdom of a race to whom the technique of emotional training was familiar, wanted to turn his fear

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into a sense of power and control. She taught him for a day or two before the actual reading of the epic was begun to imagine that he was holding a number of small snakes tightly in one hand so they could not get away. The snakes were to stand for the five senses against whom Arjuna, the kingly charioteer, goes forth to battle.

A Hindu on becoming a man is invested with the sacred thread and is initiated by an impressive ceremony. He is told that hitherto he has been a child, part of his father's household, now his father and mother are "dead," he is an adult soul, lonely in his pursuit of the eternal.¹

In the modern Western world the emotional life is usually left to take its chance. The schools wish to train the minds of their pupils, to teach them to think, so that they may learn not to be swayed by their unregulated feelings. The danger of unregulated emotion is realized and we all deplore the mass of race feeling, the anti-Semitism and colour prejudice that breaks out into lynchings and Ku Klux Klan activities. We are a very suggestible

¹ Note X, page 153.

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people and easily infected by propaganda. The desire for ritual is deep in our hearts, as the rather painful sight of a class of middle-aged graduates of our universities, marching to a reunion attired as Chinese, Buster Browns, or convicts, will testify, yet with our heterogeneous population and our desire to be untrammelled the ritual even of social life becomes poorer year by year. The Harvard graduate and the garage man are practically indistinguishable in manner if not yet entirely in manners.

The attitude of educators towards real emotional training is confused and inadequate. We recognize that the most important part of a child's education takes place before he is six years old, when he gets his emotional bearings and when unconscious impressions, made on the fringe of his conscious life, are so easily received. It is the theory of our psychologists, which has given rise to the nursery school, that a sense of impatience and discouragement, or a sense of active power, is developed at about two years old. The behaviourists have the glimmerings of the right idea—it is the emotional association

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with every experience of life which Mr. Watson would like to be able to condition in every child, so that the child's reflexes would act for his own benefit and that of society, instead of in the present desultory manner.

But in general the problem of emotional training is not seriously considered, although such a training is given to every child in a haphazard way. The whole family tone, the unconscious attitudes of parents and nurses, affect the feeling life of the children for good or bad. Indeed what is felt in the household seems to be of much more significance than what is merely said. There is also a deliberate attempt made to cultivate an attitude of loyalty to one's team, school, college, and country ; sometimes to one's church.

On the whole our emotional life is chaotic and a child may grow up well trained physically and mentally, although his emotions may be unregulated to an extent that would shock a self-respecting Bushman. Yet it seems useless to invent a ritual and difficult to revive one. How flat and tasteless on the whole are the public school May

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parties and the Girl and Boy Scout ceremonies, and what intense and shameful discomfort is provoked by an attempt to re-establish Family Prayers and Grace before Meat !¹

Lawrence attributes to the Hopi Indians in their Snake and Corn dances a desire to awaken a sense of the living mystery, a power to contemplate the vital essence of things around them. This is perhaps the essential emotion, the foundation of all others. With a desire to awaken a sense of this living mystery we might make a different approach to children. We might call to their attention the quality of sense perceptions, taste, smell, touch, colour, heat and cold, climate, day and night, sun, moon, sea—the senses and the emotions mingling in these experiences. Art, music, drama, poetry (beginning with plenty of Mother Goose) should all be delicate and profound emotional experiences. The idea that children should always create their own artistic forms, pictures, plays, has a certain appeal, but many of our children are too insensitive in an æsthetic way to

¹ Note XI, page 157, and Note XII, page 158.

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produce, and the school play especially (though it inculcates the virtues of efficiency, team work and loyalty) is too often a crime against the latent artistic possibilities of the children.

We are particularly at a loss when we face the adolescent with his sudden rush of emotional life. In primitive societies and in the Orient the young person receives an initiation, an attempt to guide the emotional life, which at this time becomes so much richer and deeper. Possibly it may be more accurate to say that the emotional life changes at this time. The child becomes a different person, often shows inherited traits, latent until now (behaviourists to the contrary notwithstanding) and lives altogether in a different world. It is both a flowering and a crisis. The chrysalis is opening.

Modern education makes scanty provision for this change. The rites of getting working papers, motor licences, high-school diplomas, and the rituals of boarding-school and society are not adequate. I do not feel entitled to speak of the relation of the Church and the children. The appropriate ritual exists, but

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I doubt whether in these days Confirmation often achieves its aim. It must have been initiated with the wise hope that the inherited religious form might at this age be filled with emotional meaning for the child. The little girls prepared for their first Communion, their white veils setting them apart as Brides of the Spirit, are a moving sight even to the most materially minded.

In America our attitude toward the development of womanhood in young girls is unsatisfactory. With their beautiful courage, freedom and honesty, they are capable of a deep understanding of the dignity and mystery of sex. Too often our system of sending them to parties at fourteen years old (where the cutting-in system forces competition for the attention of a very commonplace type of boy) both stimulates and cheapens their relations with the other sex. Instead of a maiden dreaming of her future ideal lover we have a flapper dancing at night clubs.

A curious and encouraging fact is that no particular harm seems to be done, though the competition for male favour, not usually

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obtained by the more sensitive and awkward little girl, may have some unfortunate results. A girl may be left with a sense of her failure as a woman and with certain nervous handicaps. She may develop a fancied attachment to an uncongenial pursuit which she follows as a substitute for masculine society, or a fixation in exaggerated women friendships, or a psychic dislike of men. But these dire results do not usually occur, and on the whole the freedom given to young Americans has contributed something of value to the art of human relations. The Abbé Dimnet recently paid us a compliment. He said that love, monogamous married love, was seen at its best in the United States. It is as if our young people had experimented to some purpose. We are committed to this boy and girl society, and cannot seclude our young girls, even if it seemed wise to do so. We can and should be interested in the children's social life, we can lessen the more undesirable forms of competition, and we can indicate that even a party may be an occasion for beautiful and fastidious behaviour.

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We are without a proper ritual, a magic to help us in these deep matters, and perhaps we must improvise our magic from day to day (as we do in our delicate and intimate personal relations) until a new religion shall rise from the ever-fertile Womb of Life.

Those children are fortunate whose developing personality is watched and respected. There is no definite day or hour when the child turns into a man, and possibly the wisest course for our present civilization is to surround him with elders so sensitive that they will give him the initiation which a tone of equality affords, will speak to him as man to man at the moment when he steps out in the psychological splendour of manhood.

CHAPTER XI

THE THEATRE

THE play often serves to express the unconscious emotion of the spectators. In this sense a play is a ritual and the theatre is related to our subject. The Mass, the great ritual of Christendom, can be taken as a form of Sacred Theatre. Tyrrell¹ presents Catholicism as the Mediterranean religion, a storehouse of the rites and ceremonies which for centuries both before and after the birth of Christ, had served a magic purpose in the life of the people. He says that the Church had a protective purpose in enunciating creed and dogma ; the symbols of the people were often in danger of disappearing before the onslaughts of the logically minded heretic. Therefore the mission of the Church was to preserve

¹ *Scylla and Charybdis*, etc., by George Tyrrell.

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conflicting emotional rites, all of value, and to prevent an undue rationalization. The slain god, who stands for all men, who is sacrificed for them, whose divine body is eaten to confer a share in his life. He who is raised again in the spring, when vegetation is renewed,—all these beautiful symbols have their parallel in the cults that flourished before Christ in the Mediterranean countries.

Many of these motifs were coincident with inherited ancestral images and so had a peculiar magic value for the unconscious. The Christian symbol of the sacrifice may derive from actual prehistoric sacrifices.

The instinct of the Catholic Church to set the stage of the miracle performed in the Mass, to costume her priests and to use the emotional aids of music, incense, a strange and ritualistic language, processions, and (until recently) both the dance and the theatre in the church, is an example of her profound understanding of the part religious magic plays in man's life. The Baroque Churches employ stage scenery, quite frankly painting the effect desired where it is convenient to do so.

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The rites of the Catholic Church are a magnificent example of true magic in their recognition and control of unconscious emotion. The Church forbids the use of other magic, believing that the control of emotion should be in the hands of experts.

Anyone who can enter into a form or rite and let it shape his spirit has the soul of a Catholic; on the other hand, if the significance, the intellectual meaning of a form must be apparent to you before you can accept it, you are best off as a Protestant. The real field of Protestantism is science. Protestantism, which speaking largely wishes a rational and an ethical basis for its creeds, is not properly a religion at all, except indirectly. The emotional associations are there, but the Protestant emphasizes the reasonableness of his creed and the rational and the religious are complementary fields and cannot properly mingle.

About the time that the Mystery and Morality disappeared (the rude biblical dramas organized by the Church for the edification of the public) there sprang up the Comedia del Arte folk plays, improvisations

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upon stock themes. The various characters can be faintly traced to Roman times ; one of them, Arlechino, or Punch, with his big nose, has been identified upon the frescoed walls of a Roman villa and may perhaps be a survival of a phallic godling, as the whole Comedia del Arte may be a revival of a Pagan Theatre which had been overlaid by Christian rites.

The primitive rite of the Drama survives in remote parts of the world. The Hindu celebrates his dramatic rituals, the American Indian his dances, and examples of the Folk Theatre are still to be found. Many of the qualities present in religious dramas are preserved in the plays that have been given in New York 1918-1930 by young children under the direction of Dorothy Coit and Edith King. These children learn their lines and postures and act in a spirit of unconscious emotion rather similar to the *participation mystique* of the primitive. It is as though they had at their command something of the lost art of ritual. Their critical intelligence does not destroy the creations of their imagination and faith. The children's attitude

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towards their play reminds one of the Oriental actor, Chinese or Japanese, whose technique is most rigid and in a sense artificial, who has a definite and highly abstracted gesture to signify, for instance, entering a house, or mounting a horse. The emotion appropriate is conveyed with great power, even to Westerners, if possessed of a little sympathy and cosmopolitan taste. The gesture of the Oriental actor has become through centuries of use a concentrated symbol. The primitive rite of the American Indian, the ritual of the Mass, the gesture of the Oriental Theatre are all crystallized symbols which appear to arouse and heighten the emotions, either by some natural parallel between the form and the emotion, or because they are the inherited language of the collective unconscious, as Jung and W. B. Yeats believe.

Let us now speak of the Moscow Art Theatre, the great modern theatre, and its relation to religion and magic.

The art of the Moscow Theatre differs in method and effect from that of the Oriental actor. The Russians try to create the emotions new for each evening that they play.

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Their famous director, Stanislavsky, was dissatisfied with the prevalent French type of acting, in which the actor prided himself upon his perfect presentation of the appearance of emotion, while remaining unconcerned, moving in his own person as it were under the shell of his part. This is an intellectual scientific procedure, not, as in the Oriental Theatre, the crystallization of an emotion into a rite. The French actor, of Bernhardt's type, produced an effect of emotion caused by his supreme technique. The audience admired the effect and enjoyed the technique although the actor did not feel the emotion—the occasion was a scientific, not a magic one. A virtuoso performer on an instrument is a scientist not a magician.

In Duse's art Stanislavsky observed a power of conveying feeling which he wished to see in his actors. He sometimes called it merely the capacity to feel at ease and relaxed upon the stage. His pupils were trained in a concentration of "soul," or imagination, very like the yogi practice, though directed to a different end. They studied bodily relaxation and they tried to

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concentrate upon past experience so that, for example, the idea of a peach would bring vividly before them its taste ; the recollection of a situation which had aroused anger, would enable them to relieve the emotion.¹

Stanislavsky recognized feeling as the basis of the art of the theatre. He instituted a deliberate technique of feeling which is related to the practice of magic as we have understood it.

No one who saw Stanislavsky's company in Chekov's plays, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Three Sisters* and others, can ever forget the magic conveyed, even through the medium of a foreign language. The delicate, modern and in a sense inconclusive, rhythms of Chekov were displayed with a supreme art resting on a sure emotional basis.

¹ Note XII, page 158.

CHAPTER XII

THE ULTIMATE SYMBOL

THE mystic is looking for the ultimate irrational emotion, the inexpressible experience, union with God. The magician, the priest or holy man, conceives reality, whether it be an atom, a world, or his individual life, under its irrational form, as changing and growing from within by its own nature and not in response to outward stimuli. He endeavours to dominate through understanding, intuition and emotional sympathy. By understanding and desirelessness he tries to put himself at the standpoint of eternity ; acceptance.

The sense of unity which the primitive attains in his magic rites the mystic reaches through solitary meditation and through selflessness.

"The search for the Lord," said Rama

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Khrishna, "is as delicate as the flame of a candle, the slightest thought of self and the flame is blown out." Children are said, because they are not self-conscious, to be of the Kingdom of Heaven. The loss of this childish spirit is the Fall and the expulsion from the Garden of Eden and the search to regain it is the object of religion, the aim of the mystic to be born again, to know nothing but Christ. Christian symbols express this. A man cannot attain this state by his own effort ; he must accept the sacrifice of the blood of Christ. Buddhism states the same truth intellectually, and Hinduism, as the most inclusive of religions, has perhaps understood it better than any other.

The withdrawal from the outward world in order to concentrate upon the inner meaning of an idea, the worship of an idea or an object for itself, results in an immediate relation to it, an intuition of it, with an indescribable release of emotion. It is a circle that flames or flowers out, an act of creation. This is called a Samyama by the Hindus.

The saints are said even in this life to

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have received illumination, to have lost themselves and found the Self, but perhaps the essential condition of mere humanity, the incomplete Incarnation, may be separateness, the God looking for Himself, Radha for Khrishna, Sakuntala for the King.

NOTES

NOTE I, TO PAGE 14

Some Further Aspects of the Symbol

A MORE obvious definition of the symbol might be given as follows :

It is an object or a conventional image, which represents under a concrete form abstractions, phenomena, beings real or imaginary, and the attributes that belong to them.

The oldest and most universal of symbols in this sense is the circle, originally a solar symbol, taking the form of the sun, the sign of infinity. It appears in a variety of forms, as the serpent biting its tail, as the wheel of the law and in the Rig Veda, as the fiery wheel of sacrifice. To the Buddhist the wheel represents the eternity of truth and also the continuity of the teaching of the

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law. To the Romans the circle is the symbol of Jupiter, it appears among the Egyptians, the Assyrians, in the inscriptions of the Gauls, in each case, no doubt, as a survival of an ancient sun worship.

The swastika, curious and decorative, is both Oriental and Indo-European. When the secondary lines are inscribed to the right, the figure is generally considered as a male symbol, to the left as a female. (In Thibet the female form is regarded with distrust as dedicated to demons. Both forms are employed without distinction in China and Japan.) The swastika appears in Europe as early as the neolithic epoch. It has made its way to the North American Indians, always as a sign of good fortune, in accordance with the origin of its name from the Sanscrit—*su asti*—it is well.

There are many other universal symbols, the triangle symbol of fire, the trident of lightning, the serpent of fertility. Several of these were brought to India by the Greeks, who put their art at the service of Buddhism, and the symbolic characters appear, exactly the same, in Greek and Indian inscriptions.

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These concrete symbols have in general only a feeble ethnographic or picturesque interest. There are symbols which have a more vital interest for us. The greatest is the cross, with its singular and complicated connotations, and the flag, but such symbols are not within the scope of this essay.

NOTE II, TO PAGE 18

The Idea of Irrational Truth in Spengler, Einstein, etc.

THE relativity of truth has its most striking manifestation in the relativity of mathematics, that supposed stronghold of pure rationalism, as recently illustrated by the non-Euclidean geometries of Gauss and Gassendi and the different spaces and times put forward by Einstein as an explanation of observed physical irregularities, the wanderings of the stars about the heavens, trailing space and time after them.

The history of mathematics, if followed not for the development of laws and theorems,

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but as a study of the temper of the men who were absorbed in it, is an interesting record of the history of the human mind and as such perhaps explains the lasting fascination that mathematics has always possessed for the scholar. The new mathematics promises new possibilities, opens doors to a larger world. The mathematical symbols have always held a diversity of meaning for different minds. The triangle for Euclid had no existence apart from its postulates. To Schopenhauer, the triangle was innate and apart from any theorem in regard to it. Duns Scotus held that if one knew the properties of a triangle by understanding its part in the order of the universe, as an expression of the perfection of God, one "knew its properties in a noble manner." To the mystics, to Goethe for instance, a triangle is an embodiment of the principle of triangularity, just as to St. Augustine the number six embodied perfection. "Six is a number perfect in itself, not because God created all things in six days; rather the inverse is true, that God created all things in six days because the number is perfect." To the disciples of Pythagoras

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number was the measure of all things. Pythagoras, supposedly the inventor of mathematics, thought of each number as possessing a significance of its own. One was reason for reason is unchangeable, five was the proper expression of marriage being composed of the male number three and the female number two, eight was love, friendship, harmony, etc., and in the minds of his followers such interpretations grew more intricate and superstitious. Mathematical propositions were held to be true, independently of the mind, and from this the existence of God was deduced.

Euclid, on the other hand, was no mystic. The clear well-defined limits of Euclidean geometry, considered even until our own time as the necessary geometry of space, was characteristic of the clear-cut Greek type of thought. The Greek's mental outlook was bounded by what he knew—his little town, his occupations, his friends. He had no curiosity to travel. As Spengler points out, our universe of infinite space did not exist for the classical man. The Greek tongue has no word for *space*. Plato too was not mystical.

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He developed a doctrine of ideas which were concepts of abstract truth and goodness not dependent upon sense-perception. Many of Plato's thoughts are presented in terms of Euclidean formulas ; he thought of these formulas as abstract and eternal truths existing in the world of ideas, apart from and unaffected by the sensible world.

When Euclid's theorems were formulated, they presented themselves, apparently for all time, as unescapable truths, expressing to the mystics eternal verities. There were, however, early sources of suspicion in regard to the perfection of this system. The axiom of parallel lines, meeting in infinity, was looked upon askance even by the Arabians. Gauss, who was the first mathematician to realize that the parallel axiom could be denied and yet a perfectly consistent geometry be formed, has proved that Euclid's system is not the only system nor even the most convenient one. We can start with any geometrical set of axioms and work out their logical consequences. Mathematics is an entirely free activity unconditioned by the external world. The world we know is largely our own

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creation and we can understand what we have created by understanding the laws of our own being.

The nineteenth century saw at last the reaction against the romantic spirit and the triumph of science. The atomic theory, the discovery of the law of the conservation of energy, and above all the theory of evolution, brought into favour the mechanical conception of the world. It was believed that all phenomena could be explained mechanically by the laws of motion. The origin and transformation of living species were supposedly due to mechanical agencies and metaphysical and supernatural forces were eliminated. The gospels were subjected to historical criticism, and ethnological studies of primitive religions, pursued in the spirit of sociology, tended to remove from them the character of supernatural revelation. The thoughtful man, rescued from the vagueness of theology and the ill-organized reasoning of the romantic spirit, was happy to believe the world explicable in concrete terms, to feel it solid beneath his feet. Scientific thought, however, carried within itself germs

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which were soon to assail its position. New discoveries in physics and chemistry led scientific men presently to abandon the idea of the indestructible atom and to substitute for the atomic theory a theory of energy. Professor Driesch, working with sea-urchin embryos, found that when these are cut across at an early stage the whole embryo develops from each part, a fact which he finds inexplicable along mechanistic lines. He postulated a directing cause which, after Plato, he called the *enteleche*.

The non-Euclidean geometry, in which the mathematical theorems are declared to be founded upon what Poincaré, in accord with Vaihinger, called *useful fictions*, was a serious blow to the mechanistic theory. For example, the theorem that the sum of three angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles is dependent upon the convention that if two parallel lines are intersected by a third line, the sum of the two angles of intersection is equal to two right angles. Thus both physical and mathematical conceptions seemed to have no a priori necessity but to be free constructions of the mind. The theory of

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evolution, as it developed, indicated that new forms of existence continually arose which were not contained in any preceding phases. It destroyed the rigidity of the mechanical method. Spencer, struggling always against positivism and the negation of the Absolute on the one hand, and the idea of a beneficent all-powerful Deity existing in a closed circle on the other, insisted upon a vague undefined consciousness, a mystery which exists but which cannot be conceived by science or explained in a definite manner. The methods of science proved to be quite inadequate to present a picture of reality. Mechanistic conceptions were adequate for the physical side but they faded in the sphere of the mind. Although mechanistic biology was firmly established as an explanation of the origin and function of the body, its conclusions could not be applied to psychology. In this dilemma the ancient notion of the body, as a machine governed by the soul or mind, came to the fore. The "common sense" view again reigned.

Then science itself began to be treated historically as a mental habit in process of

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evolution, the direction of its evolution being determined by the need of the individual. The scientist was no longer content to be shut up in a closed system, with the world of religion and mysticism left entirely outside of his province. The new interest in the study of psychology is evidence of this.

Einstein's discoveries offer an example of the physical basis which the new science gives for its changing point of view. His first great discovery was that the measurements of distance and of time between two events have different values for different observers, in uniform motion with respect to one another. Distance and time are not absolute. The new physics has given us a new world where neither space nor time nor matter nor force are ultimate realities. The theory of relativity is, in simplest form, a description of the mind's formation of the universe from formless material, in terms of space, time, and matter.

With the questioning of theories concerning force and ether, science has entered upon a new era. Scientific reality is much more abstract than any of our early pictures of it.

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What we call *reality* is necessarily imaginary or subjective and there are two kinds of realities, those whose existence can be confirmed by a rational process and those such as mysticism and art, which cannot be presented in such terms as to admit of the application of rational principles. The universe of modern science has nothing in common with the scientific universe upon which rationalism was built. There is room in the present scientific picture for priests, poets, and philosophers.

The most comprehensive and ambitious extension of the idea of relativity to other than mathematical and scientific fields has been made by Spengler in his *Decline of the West*. Against the truths of science, valid in the realm of nature, Spengler sets the truths of "destiny," expressed in history, the realm of the ever-flowing concept of time, as science is the realm in which time must be assumed to be static and capable of mathematical division. These two kinds of truth are of equal value and the same facts may be viewed from their differing angles. Within the framework of history, as opposed

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to nature, Spengler describes the various cultures, the Eastern, the Classical, the Magian, and the Faustian, which last is the culture of modern Europe. History to Spengler is neither the orderly unfolding of a divine plan, the concept dear to another and earlier school, nor the evolutionary progress of blind forces struggling upward, a concept familiar to our generation. Each culture has its own morphological form peculiar to the minds of the majority of the men living within it, as the general type of physical shape and structure is peculiar to any species of animal and plant. The cultures are studied as physiognomies, their architecture, manners, music, and so on, as well as their statesmanship and their wars. Spengler finds, and this is the significant fact for our purpose, that each culture has a space and time sense that differs from the space and time sense of other cultures. To the Greeks for instance the idea of the infinite, so all important to the modern, did not exist. The Greek lived in a finite world, the world of the here and now. Each culture according to Spengler is an uncaused, irrational phenomenon,

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growing up or gushing out, with no relation to the culture that went before. It is a morphological form, an uncaused phenomenon—to be understood not by reason as a fact of nature but by feeling as a symbol.

Although Bergson's *Creative Evolution* was written before Einstein definitely advanced the theory of relativity, Bergson held that reality could be apprehended by another faculty than that of the logical reason. His intuition of immediacy is an expression of truth differing entirely from scientific experience. Unlike Spengler, Bergson seems to feel that a superior and ultimate reality may be attained by the intuition. He analyses the intellectual process as shaped by the necessity for action, and therefore adapted to comprehend only those portions of the object which admit of some possible action upon it. He also points out what he considers to be a falsification of the actual time process, as the continually changing stream of continuity does not admit of the stationary moments or the arbitrary divisions of material, the cutting up and measuring off assumed in scientific procedure. Bergson believes that

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one can know reality by a kind of mystic immersion in the stream of time, and this is a sensuous experience, a matter of feeling. Although Bergson in depreciating the reason falls into the error of exalting one kind of truth over another, he has accurately pointed out the limitation of the rational field. He is again unlike Spengler in that he is an evolutionist and looks to see humanity "over-leap all obstacles, even death."

A more recent expression of the idea of the limitation of the power of the intellect is set forth by H. Vaihinger in *The Philosophy of the As If*. Vaihinger calls the processes of logical thought, such as the notions of an absolute time and space, the infinite, and so on, fictions (in the legal sense), self-contradictory processes of the mind which nevertheless lead to a true understanding of "the sequence of sensations," which to Vaihinger is coincident with reality. These fictions are to be used as necessary aids and finally to be discarded, as the iron worker discards his clay moulds. Our logical ideas, which we use in scientific work, are self-contradictory, although "the ordinary man not only

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supposes that the concepts of thought are representative of reality but regards mental methods and processes as laws of reality itself." The Aristotelian processes of reasoning have been handed down in the Western world as the dicta of common sense and have been considered to be identical with reality. But Aristotelian logic, as Masson-Oursel points out in his *Comparative Philosophy*, has no universal validity and has never been the method of thought in the East. The idea of abstract concepts, the idea of "will," the decomposition of a whole into its elements, i.e. analysis ; the composition of elements into a whole, synthesis,—these are replaced in India by a logic depending upon an investigation of the structure of phenomena, which reminds us of Spengler's study of morphological forms. Classification is by analogical symmetry and successive moments; things, substance, or phenomena are conditional but not superimposed or linked together like abstract entities. In India it has been held that a hierarchy of functions exists, some corporal, some spiritual, with no antithesis between the groups,—a postulate

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that fits the facts as well as our dualism of spirit and matter. Concepts have become for the West nearly a quasi-category. India replaces this conception by that of continuous functions ; concept has no more real existence to Indians than a mathematical point.

Unamuno, the Spaniard, believes that truth lies in a tragic conflict, the conflict which he finds between Catholic dogma (especially the doctrine of personal immortality) and the reason. This conflict is the ultimate reality, the tragic sense of life. The greatest truth is therefore irrational. Unamuno says, "The rational is simply the relational, reason is limited to relating irrational elements. At the bottom of the abyss is the irreconcilable conflict between reason and vital feeling. Reason is the enemy of life." Keyserling, dealing with the same subject, says : "Like waves in a sea, like a mass of buds, life manifests itself. The intellect, or reason, is one of these forms of manifestation, and although, like the others, it does not cover or coincide with Reality, even reason is at liberty to flourish."

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NOTE III, TO PAGE 21

Eliphas Levi

ELIPHAS LEVI, the pseudonym of Alphonse Louis Constant, born in Paris, 1810. He was educated to be a priest, expelled for his unorthodox opinions and practices, but died a Catholic. Author of *Doctrine and Transcendental Magic*, translated by Arthur Waite, a manual of white magic, based on *The Key of Solomon*.

NOTE IV, TO PAGE 43

The Magician's Circle

TAKE thou the Knife, the Sickle, or the Sword of Magical Art consecrated after the manner and order which we shall deliver unto thee in the Second Book. With this Knife or with the Sickle of Art thou shalt describe, beyond the inner Circle which thou shalt have already formed, a Second Circle,

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encompassing the other at the distance of one foot therefrom and having the same centre (i.e., two Circles enclosed between three circumferential lines). Within this space of a foot in breadth between the first and second circumferential line (i.e., within the first circle), thou shalt trace towards the Four quarters of the Earth (i.e., the four Cardinal points of the compass), the Sacred and Venerable Symbols of the Holy Letter Tau. (The letter Tau represents the Cross.) And between the first and the second Circle (i.e., in the outer Circle, bounded by the second and third circumferential lines), which thou shalt thyself have drawn with the instrument of Magical Art, thou shalt make four hexagonal pentacles and between these, thou shalt write four terrible and tremendous Names of God.

Furthermore, thou shalt circumscribe about these Circles two Squares, the Angles of which shall be turned towards the Four Quarters of the Earth; and the space between the Lines of the Outer and Inner Square shall be half a foot. The extreme angles of the Outer Square shall be made

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the Centres of four Circles, the measure or diameter of which shall be one foot. All these are to be drawn with the Knife or consecrated Instrument of Art. And within these Four Circles, thou must write the four Names of the God, the Most Holy One.

The which being finished, and the fumigations being performed, as is described in the chapter on Fumigations in the Second Book, the Master should reassemble his Disciples, encourage them, reassure them, fortify them, and conduct them into the parts of the Circle of Art, where he must place them in the four quarters of the earth, encourage them, and exhort them to fear nothing, and to keep in the places assigned to them. Also the Disciple who is placed towards the East should have a pen, ink, paper, silk, and white cotton, all clean and suitable for the work. Furthermore, each of the Companions should have a new Sword drawn in his hand (besides the consecrated Magical Sword of Art), and he should keep his hand resting upon the hilt thereof, and he should on no pretext quit the place assigned to him, nor move therefrom.

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After this, the Master should quit the Circle, light the fuel in the earthen pots, and place upon them the Censers, in the Four Quarters of the Earth ; and he should have in his hand the consecrated taper of wax, and he should light it and place it in a hidden and secret place prepared for it. Let him after this re-enter and close the Circle.

NOTE V, TO PAGE 59

A Yogi Meditation. A Buddhist Meditation

THESE are the eight steps in the Yogi practice of meditation :

1. *Yama*—Morality. Every human duty is to be strictly fulfilled, and therefore the pursuit of Raga Yoga is often postponed among the Hindus until late in life, when a man's duties as scholar, householder, parent, and so on, may be supposed to be fulfilled. The householder, though immersed in his affairs, is not on that account considered an unworthy person. The story is told of how

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search was made for the greatest saint in a city, and all signs made it evident that this saint was the butcher, because even in the midst of his (to the Hindus) unclean and degrading calling, he never neglected "to take the name of god thrice daily."

2. *Nijama*. Cleanliness, contentment, self-surrender. The holy nature of cleanliness is in pleasant contrast to the reputed habits of certain Christian and Buddhist saints. As an illustration of what is meant by self-surrender, there is the story of Rama Khrishna and his actor disciple, who was unable (so he said) to take any step towards realization—morality was not for him. His life as an artist was so irregularly timed that he could not even agree to "take the name of god once a day!" Finally Rama Khrishna said that he must give him a "power of attorney"; henceforth Rama Khrishna and not the actor, would be responsible for every act, and every thought of the latter. "But you must live as a leaf in the wind, with no will, taking what the Lord sends with utter desirelessness and self-surrender." So the actor became a great saint, because, no doubt, his ego had

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vanished. The idea was that Rama Khrishna had the keeping of the other man's soul and had freed him from all responsibility. In the same spirit, it is said, Rama Khrishna would not allow his pupils to work very long among the patients in the hospital established under his protection. At a certain point each one was sent away to meditate, "lest the poison of doing good master him." Only those in whom self-surrender was complete could be allowed to minister to others !

3. The third step in Jaja Toga is *Asana*, posture, meaning the familiar pose of the Holy man, in which we see the statues of Buddha—legs crossed and soles touching, in a manner usually impossible for a European. The hands are folded one into another, the eyes closed, and the attention directed to the "3rd eye," in the middle of the forehead, where the metaphysical sight is supposed to reside. The directions for this posture, which must be undertaken in silence and solitude, are varied and seem complicated to Western minds. It is a typical magic practice. The physical position acts on the senses, the imagination is controlled, and a feeling of

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peace, of "one pointedness" as the yogis call it, occurs. It is a form of self-hypnotism.

4. The fourth step is called *Pranayama*, or controlling the vital forces of the breath. This includes elaborate breathing exercises, and chanting of A-n-m, the syllables which represent the primary world sounds. The Hindus sometimes say that the whole world is the breath of Brahma, his word (the word made flesh), and they feel that breathing is the most subtle physical expression of man, and the centre of his control of his body. In the breath, control of body and of spirit are near. It is believed that all yogis attain beautiful voices. The connection of the voice with the emotions is evident, and so with the psychical being. The voice changes at adolescence and menopause; the voice of one race differs from that of another.

5. *Pratyshara*, or the fifth step, is mental control. In this stage one must "realize the action of the mind from the point of view of an observer." It is sometimes called mind stilling. Wandering and obsessive thoughts are to be regarded as external to the self; the Chita, or mind stuff, can be trained to

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absolute control in the last three stages, when once *Pratyshara* has been accomplished.

6, 7, 8. The last three steps of Raja Yoga are *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, and *Samyama*, and together they are called *Samadhi*. To make a *Samyama* on anything is to meditate upon it until its inner meaning (which we have called its meaning in itself, as a morphological or irrational form) becomes apparent. This is a stage to be attained only after long practice.

In *Dharana*, which is the first step in a *Samyama*, the mind is held to certain points (one-pointedness, or confining the Chita) for as long as possible, beginning with a few seconds ; in *Dhyana*, it is concentrated upon the inner meaning of an object, and finally *Dharana* and *Dhyana* merge into *Samadhi*—the indescribable state of bliss in which the absolute is realized—"Thou art That."

The following is a *Buddhist Meditation* : from the *Yogavachara*, a palm leaf manuscript of the Pali Text Society of London.

The Invocation.

Give leave ! In reverence for the teachings

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of the All-Enlightened One, Gotama, I
strive his teachings to fulfill.

I pray for the mark of upholding

the image of the mark,

for the way to the access

for ecstatic concentration

for the five raptures known to the inmost
shrine of my being, for

the lesser thrill

the momentary flash

the flooding rapture

the all pervading rapture.

Nine are the states sublime.

Be it for Nibana's sake !

The Instruction.

He sits down cross-legged, holds the body straight and setting mindfulness in front of him, he mindfully breathes in and mindfully breathes out. As he draws a long breath he knows, "a long breath I breathe in"; as he breathes out he knows, "a long breath I breathe out." As he draws a short breath he knows, "a short breath I breathe in"; as he breathes out he knows, "a short breath I breathe out." He says,

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“with eye consciousness I look down on the tip of my nose, with thought consciousness, fixed on the indrawal and the out breathing, I fix my thought form (whatever he has selected for his meditation)¹ in my heart, and prepare myself with the word Araham, Araham.”

A means the treasure of the law.

Ra means the treasure who is the Buddha.

Han means the treasure of the brotherhood.

When he has thus fixed his thought, alert and keen-minded, two images appear. First a dim, then a clear one. When the dim image has faded away, faded as if by the passing of the blemishes, and when the clear image, like a mirror withdrawn from its case, like a conch shell scoured clean, like the moon as it slips from the clouds, or like a flock of cranes before dark clouds, has entered his whole being, the Element of

¹ The subjects he may take for meditation are, among others, repose, plasticity, buoyancy of mind, self-collectedness, the bliss of sense, the Gods, death, boundless space, and the Buddha. Also the “thirty-three bodily parts,” and the “ten foul things,” nine kinds of corpses and a skeleton.

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Extension (Earth) appears, as if it had come forth piercing the stream of self-conscious life, reflected as an image on the mind. The mark of its *ecstasy* is as the light of the fire-fly, self-lit by day and night. The preamble is as the mild rays of the morning sun, the *access* is like blue and yellow flowers. Developing these three thought forms in the element of extension, withdrawing them from the tip of the nose, he should place them in the heart and then in the navel. In its due order will appear the Element of Heat (Fire) as if it had come forth piercing the stream of self-conscious life, reflected as an image on the mind. The mark of its *ecstasy* is as the morning star, the *preamble* is golden coloured, the *access* is as the young sun rising in the East. Developing these three thought forms in the element of heat, withdrawing them from the tip of the nose, he should place them in the heart and then in the navel. And after this will come the Element of Cohesion (Water) piercing the stream of life in like manner, reflected as an image on the mind. The mark of its *ecstasy* is the brightness of

IN DEFENCE OF MAGIC

the full moon with its sixteen points complete. The *preamble* has the colour of lotus, the *access*, the colour of a yellow flower. Developing these three thought forms in the element of cohesion, withdrawing them from the tip of the nose, he should place them in the heart and then in the navel. And after this the Element of Mobility (Air) will appear. The mark of its *ecstasy* is as the midday sun. The *preamble* is light red like madder. The *access* has the colour of the raincloud.

As for the Element of Space, when it pierces the stream of self-conscious life, the mark of its *ecstasy* is like jasmine and lotus flowers, the *preamble* is as a sheaf of peacock feathers, and the *access* is black as a beetle. Developing these three thought forms in each of the five elements, withdrawing them from the tip of the nose, he shall place them in the heart and then in the navel.

This is only the first part ; the instructions continue with many such repetitions.

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NOTE VI, TO PAGE 70

Yeats' Symbols

THE symbols, which stood for fire, water, and so on, were apparently the pentacles given in the Kabalistic book of magic, *The Key of Solomon*. Yeats wished to establish an order having a ritual and mysteries; he hoped the ritual would be given him "by the method Mathers had explained to me" that is, "using images to start revery." (See Chapter on Psycho-Analysis for Jung's similar procedure, page 87 above.)

NOTE VII, TO PAGE 73

Freud and Jung

FREUD has worked along an intellectual, scientific line. He helps his patients to disentangle in the *conscious* mind, some unresolved situation in the past. The difficulty,

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when understood consciously, disappears, releasing the pent-up libido. Jung attempts to free the unconscious, to get a new supply of libido, by what perhaps amounts to a rite or symbolic spell.

NOTE VIII, TO PAGE 75

Chevreuil's Pendulum

ATTACH a small bright object like a key, ring or nail, to a piece of light string about twelve inches long, the other end of which is tied to a little rod, or pencil. Hold the pencil by its other end, and *imagine* that the key, or ring, will move in a circle, while you *will* to hold the pencil still. The key will move at the end of the string clockwise, contra-clockwise, north and south, east and west, as you imagine it will do, no matter with how strenuous an effort you wish and will to hold your hand and arm still.

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NOTE IX, TO PAGE 99

The Yi-King

RICHARD WILHELM has recently translated the Yi-King, the Book of Changes. This strange mixture of symbolism and prophecy has been consulted for many thousand years as an oracle of personal fortunes and also for its philosophy, and is now arousing renewed interest in psychological circles. It is believed to have been collected, arranged and commented upon by Confucius. Wilhelm in his introduction speaks of the philosophy underlying this great book of Chinese ceremonial magic. In this philosophy the atom is conceived to change from within by its own nature, and not by a mechanist's law of causality. This idea, the Chinese say, must be grasped intuitively by concentration and meditation, not by reason. It is like Spengler's *destiny*.

In the Yi-King, the Book of Changes, the undivided stick, the Yang, stands for the bright, male, positive, creative, forward-

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going element, and the divided stick, the, Yin, equals the dark, female, negative, receiving, passive, drawing together element. Now as the combination of these elements and their passing over, the one into the other, represents every conceivable combination of successive psychological states and their development, you have in the sixty-four possible combinations of the six sticks the hexagrams, a complete symbolic map of human possibilities. Thus when you roll the sticks, which is like drawing lots, you have a map of your future which you can then "influence," before it has passed out of the stage of being born. The Yi-King gives an interpretation in mysterious and oracular language of each of the sixty-four positions of the six sticks. The Chinese say that the oracle is an echo of the personality of the questioner, his unconscious constructs the pattern when he rolls the sticks and his unconscious interprets the oracle. One must practise private meditation and systematically develop the occult powers of the soul in order to penetrate by intuition the hidden meanings of the Book of Changes. The

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sticks used in this way may be considered a typical magic procedure for freeing the unconscious, whether we regard the unconscious as a storehouse for race symbols or as an individual unconscious. The personal unconscious would release symbols of value only to the individual; the collective unconscious throws out primitive religious symbols and myths.

NOTE X, TO PAGE 103

A Hindu Initiation

As we came into the room, my mother's hand in mine, I saw that the altar fire was lit. All the priests were there and the head priest and my father were standing together.

My mother said, "My lord, I have given him my last instructions. I have prepared him before he was born and after he was born. I consecrate him to you."

My father took me over to our family priest. He said, "I consecrate this boy to you because he wishes to learn the secret."

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“Do you wish to learn the secret, my son?”

“Yes, my lord.”

“Do you wish to learn the secret, my son?”

“Yes, my lord.”

The family priest then took me over to the high priest.

“Do you wish to learn the secret?”

“Yes, my lord.”

“Has anyone urged you to learn the secret?”

“No, my lord.”

“Have you any motive for which to learn the secret?”

“No, my lord.”

“The boy is ready, shave his head. Take him out.”

They took me out, shaved my head, gave me an ochre-coloured cloth to put on. I came in again. My mother was gone. Only the priests and my father were standing there. My father said, “You wish to take this vow?”

“Yes.”

Then I went over with him; he and I stood on one side, the others on the other

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side of the altar. The high priest turned to my father.

"You have kept the vows of wedlock as you promised?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Do you consecrate the child in all purity?"

"Yes, my lord."

He turned to me, "And do you wish to be a Brahmin?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Do you know what a Brahmin is?"

"No, my lord."

"Only he who has seen God face to face or lives every moment in order to see God face to face, can be a Brahmin. Can you live that life?"

"I can, my lord."

"You swear by your father and your mother?"

"Yes, my lord."

"You swear by the elements and the fire, by the unknown gods?"

"Yes, my lord."

"You swear by the Living God you will keep this vow you are going to take?"

IN DEFENCE OF MAGIC

" Yes, my lord."

" What is your name ? " I told him.

" Have you a father and mother on earth ? "

" Yes, my lord."

" You have no more father and mother ! "

" No, my lord."

" You have no relation to anyone any more ! "

" No, my lord."

" You are standing all alone before the sacred fire, and from this time on the fire that will be given to you will be lonely, and you will be lonely with it. Are you ready to accept that loneliness ? "

" Yes, my lord."

Then we sat around the fire. He took my hand and we meditated twenty minutes or more, and then I was told the most terrible thing of all.

" He is not on earth, nor in the water, nor in the sky, nor even in the father and the mother. He is the End ever sought, but ever beyond reach. He is in you, in your parents, in every living creature, and being in everything, He is the most lonely. He is the Loneliness that is within you. He is that

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terror whose beauty you must seek throughout the world, and He is that Beauty whose terror has kept the world away from Him. Therefore, carry this Terror within your heart, and go from door to door and say to each person, "I stand like a mirror before you. Have you your perfection to reflect in it?" And this is the aim of your life, to be a living mirror before every face that comes near you. Now swear by the fire, by the elements, by your father and mother, by the Living God; forswear all and go begging and be a mirror before the world!"

I took my vow. Then he said the last thing, "Your parents are dead. Your relatives are dead. You are dead. Only one thing remains—and that is your vagrancy for eternity. Go forth!" From *Caste and Outcast*—Dhan Gopal Mukerji.

NOTE XI, TO PAGE 106

A Roman Gesture

MUSSOLINI, however, has successfully revived the Roman gesture of salutation. The

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right arm is raised straight from the side, and held palm out over the head. Babies in the countryside rush out to salute thus with joyful friendliness the passing American automobile, and the town mechanic, by the same gesture, gives you a dignified and non-committal greeting. One is convinced that these modern Italians are indeed Romans. Americans use nearly the same gesture, and spoil it by a self-conscious little wriggle of the wrist.

RARE BOOK

NOT TO BE ISSUED

NOTE XII, TO PAGES 106, 117

Essays towards training the Imagination

Two recent studies in these fields should be noted. Miss Mabel Elsworth Todd teaches a training of the imagination directed towards right bodily posture. In her system a simple accurate understanding of the actual anatomical human posture is given in order to correct the distorted picture held in imagination by many people, as the result, perhaps, of exhortations to "hold up your head, and

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throw back your shoulders." To this understanding is added a number of imaginative pictures, suited to the individual, by which it is held that the large involuntary muscles controlling the spine and the diaphragm are reached and strengthened. This is a training of emotion and imagination.

Dr. Bates, author of *Perfect Sight without Glasses*, has a series of exercises in which the sight is strengthened by the vivid recollection of a physical sensation (compare the technique of the Moscow Art Theatre)—preferably by thinking of anything perfectly black, or perfectly white. The patient must try to hold in his imagination a picture of that which he wishes to see, and he must understand the real nature of vision according to the gospel of Bates : the shifting nature of sight, and its fixation upon a mathematical point. Dr. Bates has enabled many people to discard their glasses, and he believes that perfect sight may be attained by means of a trained imagination.